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**TOWARDS A PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY  
OF FINANCIAL CORRUPTION**

**Stella N. Orakwue**

*A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a  
Phd in Psychoanalysis awarded by Middlesex University*

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## *Preface*

It is unusual for a Phd Dissertation to include a preface from the student's Director of Studies, but this is an unusual situation. Stella Orakwue did not live to be able to be able to submit a fully revised version of the thesis on which she had laboured with such serious dedication. Therefore this document must stand as final, but it is necessarily incomplete as she was unable to input the changes she had been considering in order to further strengthen the work. The project is also both final and incomplete in the sense that the author cannot now develop and disseminate her ideas in future publications. But in these pages, her distinct voice comes through clearly, as does her closely argued passion and idiosyncratic intelligence.

Dr Julia Borossa

## ABSTRACT

Freud maintained that psychoanalysis was not only to be a clinical discourse of the interpersonal and the subjective, however dynamic and necessary therapeutically, but that its principles could be taken from those contexts and applied to wider global, societal, and cultural issues. Since the 1960s, financial corruption has grown into what has become a serious and entrenched problem, albeit this is seldom addressed in psychoanalytic terms. The ultimate aim of this research study is to enquire into the *psychoanalytic* roots of financial corruption and to ask whether it is possible to attempt a *psychoanalytic* investigation and explanation of acts of financial corruption committed in particular given circumstances, such as those existing in a developing, emerging, or transitional society, more precisely in the historical period of 1960s Africa. To address this, particular attention will be paid to writings pertaining to Nigeria in its period of decolonisation, when the issue of financial corruption began gain international attention. However, a series of initial steps are necessary in order to approach these issues.

In the line of argumentation that this thesis will follow, two main aspects of financial corruption will be examined in depth: firstly, 'money', in its multi-layered significance and secondly, the internal desires of the individual with respect to 'money' and the external social environment within which this individual is located. Thus, first of all this dissertation will begin by asking two interrelated questions. What *has been* a psychoanalytic theory on 'money'? And *how* did psychoanalysis determine the role that 'money' played in the unconscious? The first three chapters of the thesis are devoted to answering these and following a survey of the field, return to pre-World War Two classical psychoanalytic theoretical writings, the correspondence of pioneering psychoanalysts and Ferenczi's *Clinical Diary*, in order to arrive at a starting point for a further examination of psychoanalysis and financial corruption. Centrally, the status of the 'anal theory of money', derived from Freud's indicative papers on anal erotism and elaborated by Ferenczi and others, will be put to the test.

Close readings of classical psychoanalytic writings led to the central argument of this thesis: that there arises the possibility of contesting the enshrined status of the relation of faeces to 'money' on the grounds of this not being a truly *unconscious* symbolic relation, as 'money' is a construct that has to be *taught*. It is argued that the theorists of the classical period did not do justice to the possible connections between *orality* and 'money' – despite strong pointers within their writings to the oral developmental stage.

The final chapters attempt to close a gap by setting out an alternative hypothesis to anality based on *the unconscious and orality*. Karl Abraham's work provides a key theoretical scaffolding in this respect. An oral hypothesis, taking seriously the actual and fantasmatic aspects of hunger and greed, is argued to be important for the psychoanalytic understanding of the unconscious motivations and impulses that could underlie financial corruption. With recourse to *both* the

anal theory and the alternative oral hypothesis, which taken together enable a deeper analysis, a reading is undertaken of selected texts on 1960s' corruption in order to explore the question of what *could* have been taking place *psychoanalytically* and to lay the building blocks towards a psychoanalytic theory of financial corruption.



## INTRODUCTION

Today, as more and more people become very rich, whilst more and more people remain in or sink into poverty; as the rigidities of the systems enabling wealth to be acquired become even more economically and culturally entrenched whilst at the same time enabling flexibilities and opportunities for the ever greater enrichment for the few, it is timely to attempt a renewed theoretical modelling of the basic psychoanalytic frameworks that are likely to be useful to examine the psychoanalytic relationship between ‘money’ and the unconscious. More precisely, the contention here is that psychoanalysis can provide useful perspectives and enlighten the probable psychic reasons for the underlying motivations behind decisions to carry out acts of financial corruption. This research study hopes to make a serious contribution to the growing body of work concerned with psychoanalysis and ‘money’, ‘wealth’, and ‘finance’.

That psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic concepts and tenets could be used outside of the clinical encounter as a method of analysis which is also applicable to problematic areas of social, economic, and cultural concerns follows on the tradition established by Sigmund Freud in works such as *Totem and Taboo* (1912 – 1913), *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930), and *The Future of an Illusion* (1927). His dictum on the necessary application of psychoanalysis to global concerns has been supported and adhered to down the decades by many of those who write about and, or, practice psychoanalysis (Roudinesco, 2001; Marcus, 1984; Kurzweil, 1998; Kernberg, 2004). Indeed, in *The Future of an Illusion* Freud appears to be prescient when viewed from the perspective of contemporary events, as he states that the distribution of wealth is important and that “civilization” has to be wary of and guard against the selfish, “hostile impulses” of “the individual” (Freud, 1927, p.6). Thus Freud used psychoanalysis as a general method of investigation, he felt that it was important that psychoanalysis be employed as an exploratory and explanatory methodology and undoubtedly,

psychoanalysis brings forward important insights into the functioning of the individual in society, especially when one takes fully into account Freud's structural theory of the unconscious mental agencies, which he defined as the ego, the id, and the superego (Freud, 1923); his theory on narcissism (Freud, 1914), his work on infantile sexuality (Freud, 1905), and the instincts (e.g. Freud 1920).

What could be the possible roots of financial corruption if the problem is approached from the perspective of psychoanalysis? This is the driving question that will be explored in the pages that follow. But in order to attempt to provide an answer, it will be necessary to take a long detour via the work of pioneering psychoanalysts, Freud, Ferenczi, Jones, Fenichel and Abraham.

It should be emphasized at this point that this study is a *classical Freudian* theoretical investigation as it focuses almost exclusively on the foundational theoretical principles laid down by Freud during the years preceding World War Two, augmented and developed by other leading Freudian theorists from the same historical time period. What was required was a simplified, straightforward, narrative in order to conduct a dialogue with Freud and the thinkers who were his contemporaries, in order to address the following: Freud's theory-making with regard to 'money', the accumulation of wealth, and the impacts on people of having and not having 'money', as financial corruption and 'money' are, of course, inseparable. 'Money' is finance. In terms of financial corruption, therefore, the question arises as to how the individual or the group moves from wanting and taking a little money, akin to petty cash, as a commonplace, everyday "sweetener" in return for a "favour" awarded or carried out, to stealing millions. But the dialogue that this thesis conducts with Freud and others regarding 'money' is a critical dialogue pertaining to gaps in his theorising. We will delve into some of the reasons as to why he had not used his own classic principles and investigatory methods in order to construct a much more expansive psychoanalytic theory of 'money'.

The subject of money was seemingly avoided and neglected by the main pioneering theorists during the classical period when they were laying down the

foundations of psychoanalytic theory based upon their observations, reflections, and work with patients. They did not establish an encompassing architectural framework for a psychoanalytic theory of 'money' from which further work could then proceed. The reason for this state of affairs is incumbent on the reliance in the work on the theory of anality with its core hypothesis which positioned faeces as the root symbolizing equation for 'money'. This theory, established by Freud in 'Character and Anal Erotism' (1908), became almost a shibboleth in psychoanalytic theory generally. This rigidity around the acceptance and use of the anal theory of 'money' meant that there was little space for thinking beyond these parameters. The present thesis contests the status of the anal theory and seeks to bring in alongside it the constructed notion of an *oral hypothesis* pertaining to what money means, one which will bring faeces in relation with *food*.

At the heart of this thesis, then, is an examination of how the psychoanalytic conceptualizations of *orality*, the oral stage of development, and the oral drive can make critical, valuable contributions to a discourse as to why an individual may be driven to commit an act of financial corruption in certain specific circumstances, particularly during periods of radical historical, economic, and social transformation. The underlying hypothesis of the research conducted was that the *need* for money is, or *can become*, can develop into, as basic an *internal* need as the instinctual, libidinal, drive for food and sex, that is, hunger and love. Further, that the need for money can separate itself from its origins and linkages as a means of payment for goods and services and has the potential to define itself on its own terms in particular conditions. When and how can that need, that hunger, that possible drive for money and wealth, turn into an unrepressed, sadistic greed, or become corrupted, or, indeed, perverse? What could be the probable building blocks for any possible psychoanalytic theory pertaining to the causation of acts of financially corrupt behaviour?

Underpinning the important decision taken to return to the classical period of psychoanalysis was that of the Derridean sense of a dual motif in the term 'analysis' (Derrida, 1998, pp.19-20) which sets forth *a demand for a return to basics, to the archeological beginnings* of a problematic, a textual consideration,

an assumption, an idea, a previous analysis, in order to embark on the process of untangling and unbinding, and then differing from and countering. In *Resistances of Psychoanalysis* (1998) Derrida analyzed the word “analysis”, and it is the connection he forms between analysis and solution that then leads to a determining demand to *deconstruct* in which analysis and critique enter as partners to untangle and untie in order to explore, in order to find possible new explanations.

But what *is* financial corruption? The 1960s had established the study of corruption as an academic discipline and several definitions of what corruption was were produced, with one of the most prominent (still in use today in various formations) being proposed by the Harvard professor, Joseph Nye: “Corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains” (Nye, 1967). Arguably, financial corruption is essentially about two elements: first of all there is the subject of ‘money’ and a need for or a greed for ‘money’. Secondly, and probably at the same time, there is ‘the individual’ and his internal wants and desires and the possible conflict between those desires and the external social and public environment within which he is located. These two central elements will be examined in the context of Africa during the 1960s, in other words the application of psychoanalytic theories and reasoning to the study of financial corruption in emerging African independent nations during the 1960s will be undertaken. This was the key period during which the problem of financial corruption reared its head as developing countries began to gain independent status on the world stage following their decolonisation. The analysis of a selection of texts from the period of the 1960s provides insights into what was taking place with regard to ‘the individual’ and the public and social space. It was also the period during which corruption on the continent was described as beginning to flourish (Wraith and Simpkins, 1963). The present thesis attends to Freud’s call to engage psychoanalysis with the concerns and problems of the wider world by attempting to seek the archeological roots of a problem, corruption, that was to become serious enough to be called a cancer decades later (Wolfensohn, 1996).

Clearly, Freud did not write about corruption, financial or otherwise, but he did write about anality and attitudes towards 'money' and that is what provides the starting point to this thesis. In the earlier chapters the focus is on the meanings that money takes on in the unconscious, allied with a close examination of the anal theory. A review of the literature is carried out in *Chapter One* and centres on how psychoanalysts theorized 'money' and the role it played in the psyche. Having separated out the vital element of 'money' in acts of financial corruption, it was clear that the priority had to be to arrive at an understanding of how psychoanalysis itself regarded 'money'. It was necessary to survey a theoretical landscape comprised not only of psychoanalysts, but also philosophers, economists, and sociologists, who could provide various perspectives on the subject of 'money', 'wealth', the 'individual' and societal transformations. Wider, more general perspectives on 'money' and 'wealth' helped to contextualize the views held in psychoanalysis whilst holding firm to the commitment to contributing a psychoanalytic understanding of 'money'. The emergence of the hold that the anal theory of 'money' has on psychoanalytic thinking with regard to 'money' then becomes clear. At the end of *Chapter One* financial corruption is discussed in the context of Africa during the 1960s in order to set the stage for the attempt at a psychoanalytic analysis which takes place in the later chapters.

As a result of the initial discussion on anality and money, *Chapter Two* conducts a close textual reading of Ferenczi's seminal paper on 'money', 'The Ontogenesis of the Interest in Money' (Ferenczi, 1914) that sought to delineate how anality and 'money' were, indeed, connected in the unconscious. It is this close textual analysis that leads to the conclusion that firstly the anal theory could be subjected to highly critical attention with regards to its claim of being unconsciously connected to 'money'; and secondly, that there is something absent, missing, 'not there', in the work on 'money' that had been carried out so far by Freud and Ferenczi. That absence is *orality*. These two important criticisms are linked. If the anal theory of 'money' is not a truly unconscious theory, orality is and can be shown to be so theoretically.

It was important to ascertain whether any of the main classical Freudian theorists had entertained notions of further developing theories on 'money'

during their conversations with each other or in any clinical notes or commentaries that they had *not* published. In *Chapter Three* the complexities that emerge from private correspondences are brought out, but the central focus of the chapter is the in-depth examination of clinical extracts from the diary kept by Ferenczi (1932). It was clear that patients had revealed worries and thoughts about 'money' that could have led to further theoretical thinking about the role it played in both their internal and external worlds. However, no further papers were published by Ferenczi on the theory of 'money'.

*Chapter Four* now has a clear mandate that authorizes an attempt to construct an oral hypothesis on the possible connection between 'money' and food in the unconscious. Karl Abraham's work on orality (Abraham, 1916, 1924) is fundamentally important in the carrying out of this task, but cannot, in truth, be taken separately from the ground work laid down by Freud in his theory of sexuality (Freud, 1905). The two taken together enable the construction of an oral hypothesis on 'money' based on the infant's primary need and primary satisfaction as derived from the intake of *food*.

In *Chapter Five* psychoanalysis and the urge to carry out an act of financial corruption are brought into contact with each other. Amongst the work of those writing about corruption in Africa during the 1960s, the two papers written by David Bayley (1966) and Colin Leys (1965) play a key role in the attempt to analyze how financial corruption can develop in an emerging state during a particular epoch and under particular circumstances. Running through the chapter is a dialogue with Freud's classical texts (Freud 1914, 1920), with respect to underscoring how the psychoanalytic basic instincts of 'hunger' and 'love' (sexual instinct and ego instinct) can be joined together in particular circumstances in a narcissistic endeavour to repair damage to the ego and to engender self-regard. One single object could satisfy both instincts: 'money'. The part that such a notion can play in the examination of financial corruption is significant. The powerful summary by Fenichel (1938) in 'The Drive to Amass Wealth' outlined the conflictual relations between the forceful needs of the individual versus ideological imposed forces. Fenichel's contribution here is that he raised the hypothesis that a 'drive' to accumulate wealth *could* exist.

*Chapter Six* concludes the thesis with reflections that draw upon the theoretical considerations thrown up by the preceding chapters. The notion of the possibility of a perverted fixation of the drive is commented upon, given the commonality of the usage of the term 'perversion' and 'perverted', albeit in a non-psychoanalytic contexts by writers on corruption. The notion of perversion as being something corrupted emerges as important and signals new avenues of research. Whether anality is still deserving of a place in relation to a psychic understanding of 'money' is also considered. Finally, Freud is taken to task for the neglect of 'money' in psychoanalytic theory down the decades.

## **Chapter One**

### **PSYCHOANALYSIS, 'MONEY', AND CORRUPTION: A SURVEY**

#### **PART ONE: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ITS APPLICATIONS**

The classical landscapes of psychoanalytic theoretical texts on 'money' contain the fundamental keys to the potential contribution that psychoanalysis can make to a deeper understanding of the unconscious motivations of a person who attempts to carry out an act of financial corruption. The application of psychoanalytic theories to international, societal, and cultural issues was already being suggested by Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, at time when the basic architectural and theoretical tenets of psychoanalysis as a new kind of clinical practice were being developed. Important examples of an applied Freudian psychoanalytic inquiry into cultural and societal issues occur in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930) and *The Future of an Illusion* (1927). *Totem and Taboo* (1912-1913) stands as an earlier application of psychoanalysis to culture. What is clear from such writings is that psychoanalysis was never merely to be a clinical discourse of the interpersonal and subjective, however dynamic and necessary therapeutically, but that its principles were seen as ones that could be extrapolated from these contexts and applied to wider global and cultural issues. What is being dealt with, after all, is human agency whether expressed in private or public spaces and unravelled inside or outside the consulting room. That psychoanalysis can, and should have relevance outside the consulting room is an argument that this study not only supports but is a key assumption underlying the thesis.

In this chapter, a survey of the discursive landscape in which these questions are debated is embarked upon, one that will discuss the occurrence of the subject of



'money' both within and outside the context of the analytic encounter. It is a journey in which there will also be engagement with more general writings from the fields of economics, philosophy, and sociology; writings that enquire into the nature of 'money' and wealth and their impact upon and relations with 'the individual' and society. The material of this chapter is divided into four sections. In section 1, Sigmund Freud, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and John Maynard Keynes form the centre of the discussion in an overview of general writings on 'money' and 'wealth'. The critical duality of the individual's relations with 'money' and the individual's relations with societal structures is brought to the fore in order to highlight the importance of the potential contribution of psychoanalysis to such debates. Section 2 focuses on the 'classical period' – the pre-World War Two years – of psychoanalytic theoretical writing on the subject of 'money' and some of the characteristic social and historical contextual features of the period that stretched from the 19<sup>th</sup> century fin de siècle to the end of the 1930s. The question debated is when and how did psychoanalysis, the "talking cure", start "talking" about 'money'. Section 3 proceeds to the necessary consideration of contemporary psychoanalytic work on 'money', as it is in this literature, in the main, that the taboo nature of the discussion of 'money' and psychoanalysis raises its head, particularly in the expressions of the financial relationship between patients and analysts. Particularly revealing is its impact on the patient-analyst relationship during socially transforming crises such as the 2008 financial crash and its resulting economic austerities. In section 4, the final part of this chapter, material on financial corruption that can aid in opening pathways towards a *psychoanalytic* investigation of 'money' and 'wealth' accumulation during transitional economic changes is set out. Texts that will be used in *Chapter Five* to provide a seedbed for the germination of a *psychoanalytic* analysis of financial corruption in Africa during the 1960s are introduced

But, let us commence the journey by first setting out the grounds for the use of psychoanalysis as a method of analysis, a discussion that reaches back both to its earliest decades of existence as a body of thought and into contemporary times.

## 1. Psychoanalysis as a Methodology

That a psychoanalytic investigation could be a beneficial addition to the various academic fields of enquiry involved in analyzing general issues such as corruption and other subjects that impact on people and societies, is based on the premise that psychoanalysis is not only a treatment for psychical, mental, illnesses – a therapy, the talking cure – but that it is also an analytical methodology for reconstructing and theorizing thinking processes with the aim of unravelling and revealing unconscious thoughts and motivations. Otto Kernberg (2004) calls attention to the fact that no problem should be characterized as being too big for psychoanalytic attention and analysis for psychoanalysis should not only concern itself with the equivalence of daily clinical problems:

The application of psychoanalytic understanding to problems of culture and society, a major concern of Freud's throughout his entire work, also represents, I believe, a responsibility of the psychoanalytic profession beyond our concern for individual patients. It involves the complex area of the manifestations of the unconscious in the social and political process, particularly regarding the dramatic developments of the twentieth century with its unleashing of human destructiveness on a scale that was undreamed of before the development of modern totalitarian regimes. The upsurge of fundamentalist movements at this time signals the permanent nature of the threat to social life by unrestrained aggression triggered in the context of the social process. Psychoanalysis certainly does not have all the answers, but I believe it is able to contribute to our understanding in this field and bears responsibility to do so.

(Kernberg, 2004, p. ix)

Although the example that Kernberg underlines is that of the manifestations of the rise of fundamentalism in the 2000s, he is providing a general point that is highly relevant to a societal problem such as financial corruption. Steven Marcus in *Freud and the Culture of Psychoanalysis* (1984) also points out that the application of psychoanalysis to varied and multiple social and cultural subjects

was what Freud himself insisted upon. Marcus asserts that psychoanalysis has the potential for the application of its theories and practices that could even outstrip its therapeutic usages. His frustration that such usages do not occur more frequently is apparent:

And I must go on to say that I cannot recall ... coming across many references in the professional literature to Freud's repeated admonitions that the major contributions that psychoanalysis had to offer would not finally be therapeutic in the accepted sense of the word. Such contributions, he held, would be found ultimately in education, in alterations of habits of child-rearing, in research and in applications of psychoanalytic theory and methods in a variety of cultural and scientific fields of endeavour.

(Marcus, 1984, p. 257)

Gay (2006) reflects that Freud, during years of turbulence, hard clinical work, and pressure from organizational conflicts between 1905 and 1915, "published papers on literature, law, religion, education, art, ethics, linguistics, folklore, fairy tales, mythology, archaeology, war, and the psychology of schoolboys" (Gay, 2006, p. 306). And in her attack against what she regards as the restrictive and systemized dominance of what could be termed as pharmacologized thinking, Elisabeth Roudinesco (2001) states of psychoanalysis that it is in essence: "explanations of the psyche through models of meaning making" (Roudinesco, 2001, p. 33). Further, "as a system of thought, psychoanalysis gave rise to theoretical trends that were distinct from one another and expressed important reworkings" (Roudinesco, 2001, p. 111). Roudinesco's *Why Psychoanalysis* (2001) sets out a defence of the continuing importance and necessity of psychoanalysis in a "depressive society" (Roudinesco, 2001, p. 3). Although psychoanalysis since its birth has had its many critics who have attacked its methods (e.g. Sulloway, 1979; Grünbaum, 1984; Hook, 1959; Davidson, 1987) there has not been significant denting of the strong argument that psychoanalysis is the paradigm within which one can explore *the repressed*: the unconscious motivations and unconscious processes underlying and forming human behaviour and testimonies (Freud, 1915; Ellenberger, 1970; Mujeeb-ur-

Rahman, 1977). In a paper on 'Jealousy' Ernest Jones (1929) sums up cogently the importance of having access to and being able to use psychoanalytic methodology:

Why psychoanalysis is a discovery of great importance can be told in a word or two. It is because it has shown that what we have hitherto known as our minds is really but the small part of a totality. In the future we shall have to refer to them by the more modest title of conscious mind, realizing that this conscious mind is only a relatively small and selected portion of our whole mind, that it is in great part derived from a deeper layer which we now call the unconscious, and that it owes to this its driving force. The nature of this unconscious, absolutely and totally unknown to the conscious mind, has been laid bare to us by Professor Freud, of Vienna, whose genius forged a method for exploring this previously dark and inaccessible territory. ... This work has not only answered many questions previously obscure, but has made us realize that there are a number of questions which till now we had not even put, because being content with our knowledge we did not know that these questions existed.

(Jones, 1929, p. 326)

Roudinesco describes "the Freudian unconscious" as "a place detached from consciousness, peopled with images and passions, shot through with discordances" (Roudinesco, 2001, p. 53). For the sociologist Edith Kurzweil in *The Freudians* (1998), psychoanalysis responds to an unconscious demand from turbulent social forces for the necessity of psychological explanations and the provision of relief from mental torments:

Freud's ideas arose from a specific conjuncture of theoretical and practical conditions and elicited a variety of responses. In central Europe, what is roughly called "modernism" was nearing its height. Industrialization and bourgeois culture had become successful enough to allow more and more individuals to focus on matters beyond the essentials for survival. ... If psychoanalysis had not emerged, another psychological explanation would have been found for the unhappiness of the affluent in spite of their possessions and for the tendency of the poor, even though hardworking, to remain poor.

(Kurzweil, 1998, p. 34)

In the spirit of a response to such a demand, let us now put forward the following general question: What is the *value* of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’ in the life of the ‘individual’?

## **2. On Being ‘Wealthy’ and Having ‘Money’**

At the outset of *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud outlines what he sees as the observable characteristics of “human civilization”:

It includes on the one hand all the knowledge and capacity that men have acquired in order to control the forces of nature and extract its wealth for the satisfaction of human needs, and on the other hand, all the regulations necessary in order to adjust the relations of men to one another and especially the distribution of the available wealth.

(Freud, 1927, p. 6)

There are multiple valid ways in which one can define ‘wealth’. In his monumental work of economic and political theory, *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith criticised people who only thought of ‘wealth’ in terms of ‘money’, and who forgot to, or did not include, “lands, houses, and consumable goods of all different kinds” (Smith, 1776 [1994], p. 478), but he understood why such an “ambiguity of expression” (Smith, 1776 [1994], p. 478) happened regularly, as: “The great affair, we always find, is to get money” (Smith, 1776 [1994], p. 456).

That wealth consists in money, or in gold and silver, is a popular notion which naturally arises from the double function of money, as the instrument of commerce, and as the measure of value. ... To grow rich is to get money; and wealth and money, in short, are, in common language, considered as in every respect synonymous.

(Smith, 1776 [1994], p. 456)

No definitional discussions of these topics can escape Karl Marx's critical input. "Money," he states in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, "since it has the property of being able to buy anything, and to appropriate all objects to itself, is thus the object *par excellence*" (Marx, 1844, in McLellan, 1979, p.179). Insightfully and passionately, Marx illuminated widely held perspectives relating to mankind's relationship with 'money', particularly its unavailability, something that he was well acquainted with given the poverty in which he spent most of his working life:

If I long for a meal, or wish to take the mail coach because I am not strong enough to make the journey on foot, then money procures the meal and the mail coach for me. This means that it changes my wishes from being imaginary, and translates them from their being in thought, imagination and will into a sensuous, real being, from imagination to life, from imaginary being to real being. The truly creative force in this mediation is money. Demand also exists for the man who has no money but his demand is simply an imaginary entity that has no effective existence for me, for a third party or for other men and thus remains unreal and without an object. The difference between a demand that is based on money and effective and one that is based on my needs, passions, wishes, etc. and is ineffective is the difference between being and thought, between a representation that merely exists within me and one that is outside me as a real object

(Marx, 1844, in McLellan, 1979, pp. 181-182).

This passage by Marx can be held to be highly psychoanalytically attuned decades *before* psychoanalysis was born. It would appear that Marx had come to realize and *to feel psychically* the impacts that not having 'money' can have. 'Money' can be considered as being never really about itself as it often represents the need for (and stands in the place of that need for) something else. If a person wants some 'thing' that costs 'money' but does not possess 'money' what is he *really* desiring, 'money' or that 'thing'? This highly pertinent area and these concerns opened up graphically by Marx's plea will be discussed in detail in *Chapter Five*, but suffice it to say here in summary that *lack* of what one *desires*

has tremendous impacts and affects on the 'ego'. Jacques Lacan's theoretical work on 'desire' and 'lack' also address these issues, and he states, almost as a throwaway at the start of a seminar from the mid-1950s (the italics are his): "Defining the nature of the ego will take us a long way. Well then, it is from this *long way off* that we will start in order to return back towards the centre – which will bring us back to the *long way*" (Lacan, 1955, [1988] p. 3). There will be reflection later in this chapter on the notion of 'the return' and having to 'return to the past' when Jacques Derrida's concept of the *archaeological* necessity of the return to the past, if one wants to conduct 'analysis' of a topic, will be broached. But for now let us continue with general perspectives on 'money'. The man described as "The Twentieth Century's Most Influential Economist" (Clarke, 2009), John Maynard Keynes, would appear to be an appropriate next stop after Marx, particularly in light of his openness to Freudian ideas.

### **3. Using Freudian Theories: The Example of Keynes**

Keynes was born in the year that Marx died in 1883 but lived, in sharp contrast to Marx's poverty, a life of affluence. Perhaps if they had been able to meet Keynes would have related that:

An act of individual saving means – so to speak – a decision not to have dinner today. But it does *not* necessitate a decision to have dinner or to buy a pair of boots a week hence or a year hence or to consume any specified thing at any specified date. Thus it depresses the business of preparing today's dinner without stimulating the business of making ready for some future act of consumption.

(Keynes, 1936 [1981], p. 210)

It can be argued that Keynes holds a central connecting role between economics, psychoanalysis, and 'money' on the basis that Keynes had close contact with Freudian thinking and its dissemination, and that these ideas appear to have influenced him with regard to what he thought about mankind's attitude to gold

and the hoarding of 'money'. Prior to exploring this, the question should first be raised as to how Freud's ideas arrived on Keynes's desk. The answer emerges from the fact that during the Edwardian years and up to World War Two Keynes belonged to a close circle of intellectuals, artists, and writers based around a particular set of central London streets – the Bloomsbury set – some of whom were very involved in the founding years of psychoanalysis in Britain. The Bloomsbury group included James Strachey, translator of Freud's works, and Leonard Woolf, whose Hogarth Press was the publisher of those translations. In his paper, 'Keynes and Freud: Psychoanalysis and Keynes's Account of the "Animal Spirits" of Capitalism', E. G Winslow (1986) explains that:

Keynes had access to Freudian ideas through Bloomsbury, which numbered amongst its associates and relations four practising psychoanalysts all of whom had studied with Freud in Vienna. These individuals were: Adrian Stephen, brother of Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf and one of the original members of Bloomsbury; Karin Stephen, Adrian Stephen's wife; James Strachey, brother of Lytton Strachey and general editor of the *Standard Edition* of Freud in English, one of the works in the International Psychoanalytic Library published by the Woolfs' Hogarth Press; and Alix Strachey, James Strachey's wife. Though opinions as to the value of Freud's theories were mixed in Bloomsbury, several members other than Keynes did make use of psychoanalysis in their own work.

(Winslow, 1986, p. 554)

Moggridge (1992) asserts that Bloomsbury "was to become for Keynes a means of relaxation and of greater education *outside* his main area of activity" but that, "For Keynes, Bloomsbury and its members were part of a way of life, and a rich one at that, but they were only a part" (Moggridge, 1992, pp. 218-219). On Keynes's Freudian connections, Clarke rather unfairly describes Keynes's use of the term "raw Freudian complex" in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (Keynes, 1919) as "certainly a Stracheyan insight, whether attributed to Lytton or to his younger brother James, already interested in Freud, whose English translator he became" (Clarke, 2009, p. 48).



Keynes appears to have been particularly attracted by Freud's anal hypothesis on 'money'. The 'anal theory of money' will be outlined in Section 2 of this chapter and *Chapter Two* will elaborate it in detail. It can be stated briefly here that the hypothesis of a symbolic equation in the unconscious between 'money' and faeces and is founded upon Freud's paper on anal erotism (Freud, 1908). Among the multitude of Keynes biographers, Robert Skidelsky is well-regarded as the producer of a trilogy on Keynes's life. Skidelsky (1992) highlights the argument made by Winslow (1986) to explain the attraction to Keynes of Freud's anal hypothesis on 'money'.

Winslow argues that Freudian ideas were increasingly important to Keynes after the First World War. Specifically, a psychological propensity which Keynes identifies as 'the hoarding instinct', or 'love of money' lies at the heart of the malfunctioning of the capitalist system. Winslow's argument is that this trait (typical, incidentally, of many economists!) closely corresponds to Freud's notion of the anal-sadistic character, and that Keynes was perfectly aware of this, though veiling his knowledge in order not to overstep the limits of economics. Thus unconscious impulses shape and distort so-called rational purposive behaviour.

(Skidelsky, 1992, p. 88)

The anal theory had landed quite a catch, as it seems that Keynes had absorbed the hypothesis on 'money' and gold and had proceeded to apply one of its main characteristics as established by Freud in 1908 – parsimony, hoarding – to the malfunctioning of capitalism and the conduct of business. That as eminent an economics academic and practitioner as Keynes had acknowledged "unconscious impulses" is important. Winslow states that: "The three business motives which Keynes emphasizes – love of money, love of money-making, and a sadistic love of power – are ... very similar to the dominant traits of the anal-sadistic character" (Winslow, 1986, p. 558). Winslow proceeds to include the Keynesian notion of "animal spirits" – that is, a spontaneous drive to action in people that is necessary in order for the economy to flourish – in the correlation with anality.

But is Winslow correct in linking Keynes's theoretical statements on capitalism and entrepreneurial optimism with the psychoanalytic concept of anality? Can the two be compared? Winslow makes a good attempt but ultimately fails to convince that there is strong enough justification for such linkages to be supported. What he failed to clarify first is whether you instil yourself with animal spirits or you have animal spirits instilled into you. In Freudian theory an instinct is a biological function, an urge. Animal spirits, on the other hand, appear to be more like a *mood*, for example, "business confidence" that can be created or dissipated, a mood that comes and goes at someone else's command, for example, the government's. A psychoanalytic instinct *must* continue its journey until satisfaction or repression into a new aim or onto a new object, or sublimated into new areas of activity (Freud, 1905, 1915, 1917).

Keynes's employment of the terminology of the anal hypothesis, for example, "hoarding", shows that the theory had reached the very heights of the analysis of *economics*, given Keynes's status both domestically and internationally as the most eminent economist of his generation, as already stated. He brought in anality again after World War One when there was a controversial and charged debate on whether Britain should return to fixing its exchange rate to the dollar with an official parity that was backed by its gold reserves. However, one option, a pre-war rate of exchange to the dollar, would lead to unemployment. Skidelsky (1992) states that:

Keynes's friend Nicholas Davenport believed that the policy of going back to gold sprang from a sadistic desire by the bankers to inflict pain on the working class. Keynes himself hinted at Freudian explanations in his book the *Treatise on Money*. He gave a reference to Freud's *Collected Papers*, edited by his friend James Strachey, where Freud claimed that the baby's 'interest in faeces is transformed into the high valuation of *gold* and *money*'. An anal fixation on gold was thus the ultimate cause of unemployment!

(Skidelsky, 1992, p. 188)

In other words hoarding and not spending 'money' (gold) could cause unemployment by not stimulating economic growth via capital investments

(Keynes, 1936; Dostaler, 1998; Lau and Smithin, 2002). Keynes's name was to become synonymous with government-provided, economy-stimulating financial boosts to countries suffering from depressions, recessions, and severe unemployment (Smithies, 1951). Arguably, a far more significant factor in Keynes's writings, but a factor that is disputed over whether it can or cannot be attributed to a Freudian influence (Barnett, 2015), is Keynes's clear *general* understanding of the psychological functioning of the individual in society (King, 2010). In the 'Concluding Notes' of his most famous work, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, Keynes (1936) observes that:

For my own part, I believe that there is social and psychological justification for significant inequalities of incomes and wealth, but not for such large disparities as exist today. There are valuable human activities which require the motive of money-making and the environment of private wealth-ownership for their full fruition. Moreover, dangerous human proclivities can be canalised into comparatively harmless channels by the existence of opportunities for money-making and private wealth, which, if they cannot be satisfied in this way, may find their outlet in cruelty, the reckless pursuit of personal power and authority, and other forms of self-aggrandisement. It is better that a man should tyrannise over his bank balance than over his fellow-citizens; and whilst the former is sometimes denounced as being but a means to the latter, sometimes at least it is an alternative.

(Keynes, 1936 [1981], p. 374)

As Keynes had claimed during the mid-1920s to be "going through the whole of the Dr.'s [Freud's] works" (Winslow, 1986, p. 555), there could be leeway to suggest the probability that he would proceed to read later works, as Keynes's general writings about mankind and human behaviour, as in the example cited above, appear to understand and accord with Freudian psychological mechanisms such as repression and sublimation but without any such attribution being made to *specific* writings by Freud. When one reads thoughts such as "dangerous human proclivities" being "canalised into comparatively harmless channels" or finding other outlets, it could be argued that the most

influential British economist of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, whose pre-eminence and influence are still undimmed today, owes a significant intellectual debt to Sigmund Freud. As Skidelsky notes: “Keynes was fascinated by Freud’s reflections on the pathology of money, particularly its association with the anal sadistic character, and by the Freudian mechanism of sublimation. Freud enabled him to build on his insight into the sacrificial nature of capitalism” (Skidelsky, 1992, p. 234).

The Freudian demand to engage psychoanalysis with the concerns and problems of the wider world is a two-way process. Those engaged in a dialogue with the issues of the world who were not themselves either psychoanalytic researchers or clinicians found it necessary, indeed often made it obligatory, to reach to psychoanalysis and its writings in order to support, add emphasis, or clarify their own intellectual endeavours, as we have attempted to illustrate with Keynes.

But let us turn now to Freud’s views on ‘wealth’ and ‘money’ with the expectation of ascertaining how *he* brought in psychoanalytic insights and psychoanalytic discourse into his wider social enquiry. In the citation from *The Future of an Illusion* (Freud, 1927, p. 6) at the beginning of this chapter, Freud is, arguably, not literally to be taken as conceptualizing ‘wealth’ in the form of monetary or financial advantages – access to land or property could also be entertained as meaningful, as Adam Smith proposed – but it is nonetheless striking that Freud *could* be regarding ‘wealth’ as access to ‘money’ and riches. Again, as Smith explained, this was a regular occurrence when people thought of ‘wealth’. Freud proceeds to state that the distribution of such ‘wealth’ was important and “civilization” had to be wary of and guard against the selfish, “hostile impulses” (Freud, 1927, p. 6) of “the individual”:

civilization has to be defended against the individual, and its regulations, institutions and commands are directed to that task. They aim not only at effecting a certain distribution of wealth but at maintaining that distribution

(Freud, 1927, p. 6)

We are not sure whether Freud is implying that this “certain distribution” is, or should be, an equitable one; but what is clear is that Freud’s hostile, selfish, greedy “individual” is thus set in opposition to the requirements of civilization, society, and the community. An inherent, resulting conflict arises because: “the mutual relations of men are profoundly influenced by the amount of instinctual satisfaction which the existing wealth makes possible” (Freud, 1927, p. 6). Now Freud has brought in psychoanalytic theory: he has stated here that it is the provision of an *instinctual* satisfaction, a psychical, energy-driven, satisfaction that is sought after in the seeking of the satisfaction that ‘wealth’ provides. For Freud an ‘instinct’ could be defined as (his italics): “*an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things* which the living entity has been obliged to abandon under the pressure of external disturbing forces” (Freud, 1920, p. 36), and it can be “historically determined” (1920, p. 37) or “freshly acquired” (1920, p. 40). To state at this point the fundamental determination of ‘instinct’ by Freud is important, as in later writings by psychoanalysts (both in the Freudian school and in other psychoanalytic schools of thought) the question of the status of instincts and drives is a highly contentious area of theory, particularly in contemporary writings. But the original Freudian determination is an essential starting place. A discussion of later works in this subject area will take place in *Chapter Four* where the nature of the ‘instinct’ and ‘drive’ will be grappled with in the context of the individual in a society that is undergoing rapid economic change.

The application of psychoanalytic thinking to non-specifically psychoanalytic questions flows through a work such as *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930). In one particular passage Freud states that: “The ownership of private wealth gives the individual power, and with it the temptation to ill-treat his neighbour; while the man who is excluded from possession is bound to rebel in hostility (Freud, 1930, p. 113). He then proceeds to analyze the issue of the attitudes of communists towards the ownership of private property by using the searchlight derived from psychoanalytic thinking on aggression. This brings out what Freud clearly considered to be the unconscious nature of property and the psychoanalytic implications of separating people from property:

I have no concern with any economic criticisms of the communist system; I cannot enquire into whether the abolition of private property is expedient or advantageous. But I am able to recognize that the psychological premises on which the system is based are an untenable illusion. In abolishing private property we deprive the human love of aggression of one of its instruments, certainly a strong one, though certainly not the strongest; but we have in no way altered the differences in power and influence which are misused by aggressiveness, nor have we altered anything in its nature. Aggressiveness was not created by property. It reigned almost without limit in primitive times, when property was still very scanty, and it already shows itself in the nursery almost before property has given up its primal, anal form

(Freud, 1930, p. 113)

We have illustrated how Freud himself brought psychoanalytic theory into his general discourse on 'wealth' distribution and property ownership. It is now necessary to address the specific question of 'money' directly. One of the central questions that raised itself at the beginning of this investigation was this: *When did psychoanalytic theorists first start thinking about the subject of 'money'?* To find the answer meant to turn attention to the period of the founding of psychoanalysis. What years were the years when its main tenets and practices were established? The answer is the period that extended between the 19<sup>th</sup> century fin de siècle to the eve of the Second World War: the 'classical' years of theory formulation. The death of Freud in 1939 is clearly an end of an era marking point (Nunberg and Federn, 1962; Jones, 1955; Roazen, 1971; Brome, 1967; Gay, 2006; Grosskurth, 1991; Schwartz, 1999). Was there a psychoanalytic theory of 'money'? What did psychoanalysis think about the subject of 'money' in its first decades?

## **PART TWO: CLASSICAL PSYCHOANALYSIS AND 'MONEY'**

### **4. The 'Anal Theory of Money': Freud, Ferenczi, Abraham, and Jones**

It was Freud who established the general anality hypothesis that is embedded in classical writings about 'money' and the unconscious. 'Character and Anal Erotism' (Freud, 1908), short and to the point, became highly influential and commands an almost mandatory citation if 'money' is to be mentioned in the literature. Nobody sought to question its underlying hypothetical premise, well described, that behaviour such as parsimony and miserliness, orderliness, and obstinacy could emerge in an individual's character as a result of conflicts and difficulties during the developmental period known psychoanalytically as the 'anal stage' (the "potty" training stage). Such conflicts were later aggravated or sublimated. Freud believed that there were people who were "born with a sexual constitution in which the erotogenicity of the anal zone is exceptionally strong" (Freud, 1908, p. 170). A second paper (Freud, 1917) reinforced his points. And, famously, he made the remarkable observation that:

It is possible that the contrast between the most precious substance known to men and the most worthless, which they reject as waste matter ('refuse'), has led to this specific identification of gold with faeces.

(Freud, 1908, p. 174)

Sándor Ferenczi proceeded to delineate a step-by-step construction of the Freudian theory of anality and its application to 'money' with his paper, 'The Ontogenesis of the Interest in Money', (Ferenczi, 1914). This paper has a strong reliance on Freud's 1908 hypothesis and makes an essential contribution to understanding and reflection. *Chapter Two* gives it detailed consideration.

In 1917 Karl Abraham published 'The Spending of Money in Anxiety States', which promised much from its title in that one hoped for more than the

exploration of anality. Could the “spending of” be separated from the “interest in” ‘money’? However, the standard use of anality as explicatory factor was maintained. But Abraham’s paper is noteworthy for the potential it provides for the possibility of a differentiation in root source between “interest in” and “spending of”. The following year, Ernest Jones published a typically comprehensive paper – lengthy and with detailed types and sub-types, divisions and sub-divisions – on what constituted the anal character, and upheld the relation between faeces and ‘money’. In ‘Anal-Erotic Character Traits’, Jones (1918) states that:

In Freud’s original article on the subject he proffered the opinion that the association is in part a contrast one – between the most valuable substance man possesses and the least valuable; but it is now known that the connection is a more direct one – namely, that the sense of value attaching to money is a direct continuation of the sense of value that the infant attaches to its excretory product, one which in the adult consciousness is replaced by its opposite, though it still persists unaltered in the unconscious.

(Jones, 1918, p. 426)

In Abraham’s 1921 response, ‘Contributions to the Theory of the Anal Character’, an “amplification and completion in certain respects” (Abraham, 1921, p. 372) to Jones’s 1918 paper, he writes about “the education of the child in cleanly habits”. Namely that: “The child has not only to be taught not to soil its body and surroundings with excreta, but it has also to be educated to perform its excretory functions at regular times” (Abraham, 1921, p. 372). The child is thus forced to renounce its “coprophilia and its pleasure in the process of excretion”, which Abraham characterizes as a “double process of limitation of infantile impulses” that has psychological repercussions (Abraham, 1921, p. 372.).

What was emerging from the literature was a single anal-focused hypothesis on ‘money’ and the unconscious. It was becoming clear that Freud’s anal theory was being firmly entrenched as a central principle in psychoanalytic theoretical discourse on ‘money’. And, as argued earlier with regard to Keynes, this



entrenchment meant that the 'anal theory of money' attained influence outside of psychoanalytic circles and discourse.

### **5. Otto Fenichel's 'Drive to Amass Wealth'.**

The seemingly unchallengeable nature of the connection of 'money' to faeces in the psyche is only contested seriously in the 1930s by the Marxist psychoanalyst and theorist, Otto Fenichel. But even Fenichel is ambiguous and conflicted about it. What is the relation of instinctual forces, such as anality, versus social, ideological, forces such as capitalism or communism? He explores this area in 'The Drive to Amass Wealth' (Fenichel, 1938), in which he asks outright whether there is an 'instinct' to acquire wealth. This is an important paper in which Fenichel expresses ambivalence, whether intentionally or not, as he rails against biologically structuring factors that are to the detriment of environmental impacts, whilst he seemingly ignores the fact that his continued support of anality also does that. His ambivalence is expressed in statements such as: "anal eroticism produces the desire to collect something. What is collected is determined by reality" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 89) but that "capitalism ... cannot be the result of an 'anal-erotic mutation' that has fallen from heaven" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 93). It could be construed as puzzling that the foremost pioneering theorists of the pre-World War Two period – Freud, Ferenczi, Abraham, Jones – and other adherents of the 'money' equals faeces equation, seemingly cannot countenance that 'money' is something that the instinct to collect *can* latch upon and that it is not necessarily an unconsciously fundamental underpinning of the anal collecting instinct. Fenichel postulated that 'money' could be regarded as a supply of narcissism from the environment for the benefit of the ego's self-regard (Fenichel, 1938, p. 78). This statement will be examined in detail in *Chapter Five*. But it is the almost total reliance on anality's 'money' equals faeces equation that is striking here given that 'possession' and 'gift' and 'collecting', even 'hoarding', extend to a variety of objects for the infant – not just faeces.

In summary it seems that it can be stated that up to World War Two not only the earliest psychoanalytic but also subsequent writings on 'money' and its role in the unconscious were based on the Freudian hypothesis of the 'anal theory of

money', in which the equation between faeces and 'money' was central. None of the leading theorists deviated from this rule and its status went unchallenged, with the exception of Fenichel's ambivalence. Further, most of the thinking about 'money' was done in relation to, and from the perspective of, its impacts on the adult character types that are described as developing from the psychoanalytic concept of anal erotism. Freud's launch paper in 1908 discussed 'money' *as a result of* anal erotism. There is no sense of money *having* to be discussed for the sake of its impacts on patients' lives outside of anality. 'Money' was explored as *anality* and as *anal conflicts*. Freud and his innermost circle did not develop an overarching or more general 'theory of money' when they were laying down the fundamental theories of psychoanalysis. Further, since its establishment the notion of an *anal* theory of 'money' has held as the decades have passed despite coming under some criticism as modern psychoanalysts attempted to renew and to reassert an engagement and a dialogue with the subjects of 'money' and 'wealth', as will be discussed in Section 3. The question has to be raised whether what can be characterised as a rigidity in perspective was a result of the times in which the founding theorists lived, in other words was it a repression or a counter reaction against the turbulent, disturbing, potentially overwhelming societal changes of their times? What *were* the social and historical contexts of 'classical' psychoanalysis'?

## **6. Classical Psychoanalysis: Historical Contexts**

What were to be considered 'classical' psychoanalytic principles, theories, and tenets were produced in phases beginning with the 1895 publication of *Studies on Hysteria* (Breuer and Freud). According to George Makari in *Revolution in Mind*:

By 1895, Sigmund Freud had distinguished himself from other French-oriented psychopathologists with his notions of defence neurosis, mental conflict, psychical analysis, and transference. In the process, he began to refine the ancient dictum: know thyself

(Makari, 2008, p. 48)

This was a period of rapid and sustained development of psychoanalytic ideas and the leading figures among many brilliant minds and thinkers were Freud himself, the Welshman Ernest Jones, the German Karl Abraham, and the Hungarian Sándor Ferenczi. Clara Thompson, a former pupil and patient of Ferenczi's, sub-divides the formative years of psychoanalysis into several stages in *Psychoanalysis: Evolution and Development* (1952):

The first period extends from the beginning of Freud's collaboration with Breuer (about 1885) to around 1900. This was a time of great discovery gleaned from clinical observation ... The second period extends from 1900 to somewhere between 1910 and 1920 ... it covers the development of the first instinct theories, which drew attention to the biological sexual development of the child. ... From 1910 to 1920 Freud also was gradually evolving a new theory granting etiological importance to factors other than sex. The third period, therefore, began in 1910, although the full significance of its changes was not felt by the main psychoanalytic school of thought until about 1920. This was a time of an enlarging field of interest. A theory about the total personality was emerging. Narcissism came under scrutiny and this plus the discovery of the importance of another drive, aggression, laid the ground work for a new theory of instincts which was finally presented by Freud early in the 1920s.

(Thompson, 1952, pp. 4-5)

But in what historical and social contexts were psychoanalysts conducting the work in which their mutual intellectual stimulation and jousting is evident from their huge correspondences (Paskauskas, 1995; Falzeder, Brabant, and Giampieri-Deutsch, 1993)? The cities that they called home – Vienna (Freud), London (Jones), Berlin (Abraham), Budapest (Ferenczi) – were capital cities at the centre of and pivotal to dramatic social, political, and economic transformations in Europe during the period between 1895 and the second world war. Psychoanalysis's classical past is allied with and berthed in those years during which many important historical events took place, each with its

own impacts upon the pioneering psychoanalytic thinkers and theorists and their patients, as they were all members of European societies and nations and therefore witnesses to the turbulence and changes in their own societies. Thus when one asks the question: In what historical contexts were classical psychoanalytic tenets founded in, surely the response has to be – given the mass of events and contexts – *which* particular historical context, *which* social context, and even, perhaps, *which* cultural context should one expound on for the purpose of contextualization? Young-Bruehl and Schwartz (2012, p. 142) attempt to construct a “history of history-writing” about psychoanalysis that is focused mainly on its internal group dynamics as opposed to external world events. But there is a sense of what one could describe as the “bigger picture” not being fully addressed. As Loewenberg (2007, p. 19) argues: “psychoanalysis *is* history” (his italics) and “any history is a product of interaction and compromise of the historian’s inner life and the socio-political outer world” (Loewenberg, 2007, p. 19). Kurzweil (1998), in the citation earlier, spoke of externalities such as modernization, industrialization, and bourgeois culture. And these were profound influences. But, in addition, prior to the outbreak of war in 1914 and its devastation, there was the closeness of relations between Vienna and Budapest under the rule of the Habsburg monarchy. The post-war years brought the nationalist repercussions of the break up of the Habsburg empire and revolutionary ferment in Hungary. The economic chaos, booms and busts of the 1920s – Berlin, Abraham’s city, was a particularly fraught case – culminated in the 1929 Wall Street crash and the Depression years of the 1930s across north America and Europe. The social uncertainties and national integrationist tensions of the times were underlined politically by the coming to power of new forms of government in the form of communist Russia and the rise of fascism (Hobsbawm, 1987, 1994; Joll, 1976).

But, overall, and it might appear surprising given the above list of major events that took place during the ‘classical’ period, the single factor which is most noted in commentary about the social and historical context in which psychoanalysis developed is that it was beholden to “bourgeois culture”. The growth and

influence of an aspirational, middle class, bourgeois, liberal, intellectual elite in Europe's capital cities was fundamental to the development of psychoanalysis and its theories. The factor of, and social context of, new "bourgeois culture" appears to override the other turbulent and world changing events of psychoanalysis's founding years. It seems that the last two or so decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century cast forward into the 20<sup>th</sup> century a *particular* kind of person with a particular mental outlook and cultural perspective. But Eric Hobsbawm points out acutely what he describes as "the paradox", that is: "It was only quite late in the century [19<sup>th</sup>] that bourgeois society developed a style of life and the suitable material equipment actually designed to fit the requirements of the class" (Hobsbawm, 1987, p. 166). Commenting on Carl Schorske's book *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (1980), Hobsbawm writes that its basic theme was that: "The culture of *fin de siècle* Vienna, it has been argued, was largely that of a class and a people – the middle class Jews – who were no longer allowed to be what they wanted, namely German liberals" (Hobsbawm, 1987, p. 168). Jewish migration from Eastern Europe to central and northern Europe was part of the mass migrations of peoples of these times. It was such a journey that Freud's own family undertook to arrive in Vienna when he was a child. The Jewish populations of Austria and Hungary increased substantially as a result of these migrations and many were able to attain prosperous and professional lives despite anti-semitism (Gay, 2006, pp. 18-21). As part of the migrations to Budapest, Ferenczi's family, with its 1848 revolutionary background, eventually settled into life as members of the new Jewish middle class intellectuals (Moreau-Ricaud, 1996, p. 42). Marcus (1984) states that:

Psychoanalysis was created in particular cultural and historical sets of circumstances and bears upon it the markings of the contexts in which it originated. It came into being in the context of a liberal bourgeois culture and may in some measure be understood as an institution of late high bourgeois culture – in its strengths, weaknesses, and contradictions.

(Marcus, 1984, p. 262)

## 7. The Critique of Classical Psychoanalytic Texts.

In reading texts written during the classical period it becomes apparent that a decision has to be reached about the status of the works in the light of contemporary thinking. On what basis are they to be read? And what weighting should be accorded to this psychoanalytic output of the classical era? The centrally important question was this: On what basis should we assess the writings of the past? Should we deal with historical texts in the light of contemporary developments and contemporary thinking or should we deal with them on their own terms, that is, on the terms existing during their own particular period? Is it fair to criticise, or even attack, texts written in the past on the grounds of what we have found out in subsequent decades (or centuries even)? Should there not be an insistence on maintaining the integrity and the validity of classical texts – from any academic discipline – *as classical texts*? Could this be done without being considered reverential and uncritical?<sup>2</sup>

In considering this problematic it can be argued that there are at least two ways that one can respond. First, clearly it would be, and is, legitimate and proper to set out a critique of classical theoretical writings on ‘money’ that was based on, for example, contemporary object relations theories or contemporary Lacanian or Kleinian theories – if that was the objective of the research. Such an objective would have to be stated. Secondly, it is also legitimate and proper to set out a critique of classical writings and perspectives that intends to critique the writings of the past on their own terms. In other words, a critique that is based on such historical texts having ignored or failed to acknowledge the knowledge that surrounded them or was readily available to them. Again such an objective would have to be stated.

The decision was reached that following the necessity of the return to the classical psychoanalytic texts on ‘money’, the second approach would be the one taken with respect to the texts in question. The approach in this thesis would be to allow the criticisms that could be made of the classical theoretical texts to emerge *themselves* from the writings and communications made by the

foundational theorists. Such an approach would also allow the space for the important argument to be made that any gaps or omissions could or should have been seen by the original writers *themselves* but were not.

Freud's, Ferenczi's, Abraham's, and Jones's theoretical works on 'money' during the classical period were vital and would be considered on their own terms in the chapters that will follow. What would emerge as presence or absence in their work? It becomes appropriate to now discuss the Derridean philosophical position, which resonates with the decision that was taken here to 'return to the past', to the classical period, to focus there, to begin digging there.

## 8. Jacques Derrida and the Return to the Past

In *Resistances of Psychoanalysis* (1998) Derrida analyzes the word "analysis", which for him is about language and the use of language, and the meaning of words: their presence and its meaning, their absence and the meaning of that absence. He is meticulous in his close textual readings, his analyzes, and the range of his questionings.

The Greek word *analuein*, as is well known, means to untie and thus to dissolve the link. It can thus be rigorously approached, if not translated, by the Latin *solvere* (to detach, deliver, absolve, or acquit). Both *solutio* and *resolutio* have the sense of dissolution, dissolved tie, extrication, disengagement, or acquittal (for example, from debt) *and* that of solution of a problem: explanation or unveiling. The *solutio linguae* is also the tongue untied.

(Derrida, 1998, p. 3)

Note how Derrida proceeds from the Greek *analuein* to the Latin *solvere*, from analysis to solution, and connects the two by untying and detaching. Analysis is "untangling, untying, detaching, freeing, even liberation" (Derrida, 1998, p. 3) and perhaps, therefore, the solution can be, too. But what takes place in such a process? Surely one finds in the process of untying and detaching whether something there should be there or not, or whether something *not* there *should*

be there? In other words, one must determine in the process of untying and disentangling, in the process of analyzing and critiquing, whether the analysis or the solution on offer *at present* is *adequate*.

This connection between analysis and solution then leads to a determining and defining use of the Derridean demand to '*deconstruct*', in which analysis and critique enter as partners to detangle and untie in order to explore, in order to find possible answers. Derrida states (the italics are his):

What is called "deconstruction" undeniably obeys an *analytic* exigency, at once critical and analytic. It is always a matter of *undoing*, *desedimenting*, *decomposing*, *deconstructing* sediments, *artefacts*, presuppositions, institutions. And the insistence on unbinding, disjunction, dissociation, the being "out of joint", as Hamlet would have said, on the irreducibility of difference is so massive as to need no further insistence.

(Derrida, 1998, p. 27)

Thus, existing marriages or existing relationships may or *have* to be divorced. Such a divorcing or a breaking apart may or *have* to be insisted upon in order for the analytical, critical work of finding *meaning* to take place. In order for the finding of new interpretations and, or, probable answers that may provide possible explanations that *differ from* or are *counter to* perceived or received or accepted presently existing knowledge. That is what would appear to be the Derridean task demanded that is irreducible. Further, Derrida states:

Since this analytic dissociation should also in deconstruction, at least as I understand it or practice it, be a critico-genealogical return, we have here apparently the two motifs of any analysis, which we have analyzed by analyzing the word *analysis*: the *archeological* or *anagogical* motif of return to the ancient as archi-originary and the *philolytic* motif of the dissociative – always very close to saying dis-social – unbinding.

(Derrida, 1998, p. 27)



The Derridean sense of a dual motif in the term analysis (Derrida, 1998, pp.19-20) sets forth *a demand for a return to basics, to the archaeological beginnings* of a problematic, a textual consideration, an assumption, an idea, a previous analysis, in order to commence the processes of untangling and unbinding, of perhaps differing from and countering. An analytical, critical disentangling process with the possibility of an alternative understanding of, and a new knowing of, present-day knowledge. One has to return to the basics that came before and one has to be prepared to *unbind* what one might find buried there.

The philosopher, theologian, and long-term critical specialist on Derrida, John D. Caputo, asserts in *Truth: Philosophy in Transit* (Caputo, 2013) that deconstruction should be overhauled as the centre piece of Derridean thought and replaced by a construct of the future, *l'avenir*, and '*the event*'. This, Caputo postulates, better encapsulates Derrida's work. However, contrary to Caputo's attempt at a reframing of deconstruction and a repositioning of Derrida's thinking, one *can* still connect deconstruction to this 'event of the future', because the Derridean demand to return to the archaeology of the past and to unbury the knowledge found there, to deconstruct, means, results, implies a *reconstruction*, a new meaning of *that past's future 'events'*. In other words: a reconstruction and new meanings for today, as *today was the future in the past*. The past impacts the future and thus it is vital to deconstruct, to detangle, to analyze that past rigorously in order to better understand (from the position of looking back) the events that *were* to take place. Psychoanalysis returns to the past to unravel, to find the roots of, to unbury what is troubling today.

Although this thesis will not follow an explicitly Derridean outlook, it is in sympathy with the Derridean philosophical demand to return to the past in order to better understand today and its possibilities for the future. This return will begin with the close examination of classical texts on 'money' (particularly with the analysis of Ferenczi's 1914 paper undertaken in *Chapter Two*). But before we get to that point, let us now turn to a review contemporary

psychoanalytic literature on 'money' and delve into its connections with this classical heritage.

### **PART 3: CONTEMPORARY PSYCHOANALYTIC TEXTS**

#### **9. The Post-Classical Psychoanalysis of 'Money'**

In July 2010 an international "landmark conference" was convened in London entitled 'Psychoanalysis, Money and the Economy', and attended by "a multinational cast of philosophers, psychoanalysts, economists and cultural theorists to debate the relationship between theories of mind and money in the shadow (or light) of the global financial markets crash of 2008-10" (Bennett, 2012, p. 6). The conference's organiser, the academic David Bennett, wanted to "re-open a dialogue between two disciplines – psychoanalysis and economics – which for much of the past 100 years have been mutually indifferent and mutually opaque" (Bennett, 2012, p. 6). In the book he edited of the conference papers, *Loaded Subjects*, Bennett assesses that the topic of 'money' was handled by its main theorists, "Freud, Ernest Jones, Sándor Ferenczi" during the early years of psychoanalysis in a manner that "de-historicised and biologised money-fetishism, explaining what they called 'the capitalistic instinct' of acquisitiveness as a neurotic displacement (in the potty-trained adult) of a universal, infantile anal-erotic drive" (Bennett, 2012, p. 19). And, moreover, that:

Sigmund Freud, Sándor Ferenczi, Ernest Jones and Karl Abraham were just the earliest psychoanalytic theorists to decode monetary transactions and relationships into their presumed unconscious motives. And yet, psychoanalysis itself has been notoriously reluctant to speak frankly of its own economics as a profession and business - of how 'filthy lucre' is the indispensable stuff of its own transactions.

(Bennett, 2012, p. 8)

Bennett states in his paper, '*Homo Oeconomicus vs. Homo Psychologicus: A Critique of Pure Reason in Economics and Psychoanalysis*', that: "psychoanalysis,

from its inception, has viewed the psychology of money as profoundly irrational – as a realm of illusion, neurosis, phantasy and psychopathology, both individual and collective“ (Bennett, 2012, p. 8). In staging a “confrontation” between “*homo psychologicus* and *homo oeconomicus*”, Bennett sought to negate the “historical rift” between these two subjects which designated primarily that “psychoanalysis deals with the ‘symbolic meanings’ of money (as if there were any other kind) whereas economics deals with ‘real’ money” (Bennett, 2012, p. 8).

But the first important post-classical collection that brought together writings on ‘money’ and psychoanalysis was *The Psychoanalysis of Money*, published in 1976 under the editorship of the writer and psychoanalyst, Ernest Borneman. It is a rich and varied collection of work. If Otto Fenichel was ambivalent about the anality hypothesis with respect to ‘money’ in the 1930s, both Borneman (1976) and Bennett (2012) have no hesitation in casting off ambivalence in their criticisms. Borneman states categorically that:

When children who once found pleasure in retaining their stool later become collectors, this tells us nothing about the origin and development of capitalism, for what such anal erotics collect need not have monetary value. And even if a few anal characters should become bankers, this does not explain why capitalists constantly have to increase their capital if they do not want to be destroyed by competitors with larger capital reserves. Anal erotism has its specific laws, capitalism has others. During certain periods, both need and promote each other. At other times, they conflict. Since the anally oriented desire for possessions does not take its cue from the value of the collected objects but is governed by the compulsive element in collecting, it becomes irrational and, in its extreme form, contradicts the logic of capital and therefore harms it. Besides, there are aspects of anal erotism such as obstinacy and a desire for order which are directed against the ruling class and can in no way be reconciled with the interests of capital. All equations of anality and an interest in money should therefore be studiously avoided.

(Borneman, 1976, p. 70)

And there is a further no mincing of words from Bennett:

It was this sociologically impoverished view of the mentality of *homo oeconomicus* - the insistence that the foundation of economic reason is merely shit - that the Marxist Freudian Otto Fenichel objected to in his 1938 essay, 'The Drive to Amass Wealth', in which he criticised what he called Ferenczi's and Freud's 'biologising' of the origins of money and the drive to accumulate it. In Fenichel's view, it was capitalism, not anal eroticism, that made the pursuit of wealth both a rational and a neurotic drive.

(Bennett, 2012, p. 19)

In his paper 'On the Psychodynamics of Collecting', Peter Subkowski (2006) not only aligns collecting with perversion in a further example of rethinking and reworking on the subject, but also asserts that gender differences demonstrate

how the castration complex is being experienced. This can elucidate the special proximity of collecting to the perversions in men. In the unconscious, the object of collection can represent the phallus for the man, or, at an earlier stage of development, the phallic, omnipotent and magically endowed breast-object, which could be lost and thus must be protected, hoarded and hidden because of its greater vulnerability.

(Subkowski, 2006, p. 386)

Subkowski makes a strong case for the operation of the castration complex in male collectors, although his juxtaposition of the Freudian phallus with what he describes as a 'phallic breast-object' raises questions that he does not answer regarding how such an intriguing object arises and how it mechanizes itself.

The recent arrival and acceptance of the disciplines of 'emotional finance' and 'behavioural economics' (Pixley, 2004) highlight the reluctant but now equally necessary acceptance of the notion of 'irrationality' in mankind's relations with 'money' specifically and economics generally. The psychoanalyst and university professor, David Tuckett, entered these newly defined areas with the book *Minding the Markets* (Tuckett, 2011), which takes up the themes from and

expands on his earlier work in which he investigated notions of financial products as phantasy objects involved in unconscious and irrational decision-making among investment managers (Tuckett and Taffler, 2008). Since the 2008 financial market crashes and the continuing economic recessions and austerity packages, and the violent reactions to them by people in different countries across the world, fresh attention has also been cast upon the *patient-analyst* consulting room-centred discourses on 'money'.

## 10. The Encounter in the Consulting Room

Bennett (2012) confirms that there is evidence that analysts are still engaged in troubling dilemmas about how to handle the subject of 'money' and argues that:

analysts themselves often find it hard to reconcile their therapeutic with their economic selves by owning up to being at once rational and self-interested subjects; they are more comfortable discussing their patients' unconscious attitudes to money as a transference object than discussing the relationship between the economics and ideology of their own profession.

(Bennett, 2012, p. 21)

Light is being shone on what has been deemed the "professional blind-spot" (Bennett, 2012, p.11): the financial and economic, in other words, *monetary* dependence of psychoanalysts themselves on their patients' ability to afford treatment and to pay their bills. The perceived lack of frankness and unwillingness to address 'money', the what is considered to be the difficult and taboo area of the silence about psychoanalysts' fees and patients' bills, has been acknowledged within the profession: for example, David Krueger's *The Last Taboo* (1986), Klebanow's and Lowenkopf's *Money and Mind* (1991) and Herron's and Welt's *Money Matters* (1994). Marcus (1984) states frankly that:

To begin with, the institution has generally gone along with the inflationary character of the economy. Ten, fifteen or twenty-five dollars for a fifty-minute hour in 1950 has become fifty, seventy-five

and more for a forty-five minute session. To be sure, money is not the only force at play here, but sooner or later a point of diminishing returns has to be reached. Psychoanalysts have as a rule chosen to live in a certain moderately affluent – and identifiable – style. Their fees are to some extent an expression of this choice. One of the partial results of such a determination is the diminished number of psychoanalytic patients who are embarked upon a full analysis in the older sense of the term. According to a recent survey, analysts reported that only about 20 percent of their time was now spent in classical or full-scale analysis.

(Marcus, 1984, p. 260)

More recently, books such as Lesley Murdin's *How Money Talks* (2012), and Berger's and Newman's collection, *Money Talks in Therapy, Society and Life* (2011), expand on and illuminate further the dilemmas of discussing 'money' within the clinical encounter. Murdin uses the device of a fictional character, who is partly based on clinical accounts, to explore the territory. She returns to a straightforward discussion in the latter part of the work, where it is notable that the points made by Marcus above with regard to high fees and the unaffordability of treatment in the US by those who need it but do not have the income to pay for it are clearly continuing problematics for psychoanalysts in the UK. Berger and Newman, north America-based analysts, are to be commended for the spread of views in their collection of essays from practitioners, and for the touching upon sensitive areas such as the analyst's own desire, unconscious and conscious, for 'money'. Such desire extends to wanting to have enough 'money' and the neurotic conflicts that this engenders for the setting of high enough fees, fear of the economic impacts of the loss of income from the loss of patients, and the duration of treatments that might, unconsciously or consciously, be continuing long after having reached what could be considered to be a termination point for the patient.

In *Truth Games: Lies, Money, and Psychoanalysis*, John Forrester, quoting Bob Dylan, claims that "money doesn't talk, it swears" (Forrester, 1997, p. 34), and that: "Money, in its very nature, is potentially the yardstick of all other values; yet its very blankness reveals that it underpins everything else only because of its

intricate relations with everything else” (Forrester, 1997, pp. 34-35). This is a succinct encapsulation of the outcome that one could ascribe to an attempt to capture what the value of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’ can mean. But what happens, what is the state of one’s mind, when something that “underpins everything else” appears to be completely unattainable? In ‘When Money Dies: Anxiety and Melancholy in Times of Economic Crisis’, the Lacanian psychoanalyst and theorist, Renata Salecl (2010), writes of ‘money’ as being akin to Lacan’s object *petit a* – that cause of unattainable desire. Here it seems is the notion of residual desire, a desire that is left when the subject’s biological and physiological needs, such as hunger and thirst, have been met. A desire for something unnameable that has been lost or that is lacking in one’s life. A desire that perhaps can never be attained.

In the final section of this literature review let us address how these valuations of the desirability of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’ can form and change during radical social and economic transformations. What could be the *psychoanalytic* impacts during such periods on conscious and unconscious notions of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’, particularly when the concept of ‘the market economy’ enters into new territories? The considerable social disruptions have been well described by contemporary economists (e.g. Stiglitz, 2002; Kay, 2003).

## **PART 4: PSYCHOANALYSIS, ‘MONEY’, AND CORRUPTION**

### **11. Towards a Psychoanalytic Theory of Financial Corruption**

The Russian professor and psychoanalyst Viktor Mazin’s ‘The Meaning of Money’ (2012), in *Loaded Subjects*, provides a brilliant account of the varied bewildering social transformations that can occur when ‘money’ enters forcefully into social spaces in which it was previously held in disregard and contempt but is then placed on a pedestal. His paper focuses on the days of wrenching transition from Soviet Union to Russian Federation via perestroika that took place from the late 1980s and through the 1990s: the dismantling of a socialist value system and a socialist economy and the bringing in and heralding of western-approved capitalist formations such as privatizations and

‘competitive markets’. These were traumatically ambivalent journeys that countries in Africa and other parts of the developing world, such as China (White, 1996), also embarked upon during the same period. But what Mazin makes available is a psychoanalytically-drawn cultural and social perspective. He states early on that:

In the USSR, interest in money was regarded as a sign of philistinism, of a petty-bourgeois mindset. Loving money meant not loving genuine values: communism, labour, learning. It was impossible to love money and communism at the same time, given that money was famously supposed to die off under communism.

(Mazin, 2012, p. 150)

But by the 1990s Mazin makes clear that capitalism had taken a triumphant grip:

People set about accumulating money, laundering it and praising it in the mass media. People were taught how to love it, how to make it, how to charm it and where to keep it. People began killing for small amounts of it, and this killing was not as pretty as in American westerns. In Soviet times, inspired by the discourse of the university, people would say, ‘Pushkin is our everything!’ Now, in conformity with the discourse of the capitalist, the country said as one: ‘Money is our everything!’

(Mazin, 2012, p. 154)

The *orality* implicated in such a pursuit of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’ is made clear in his section entitled “ORAL MONEY, OR THE VITAL BABLO OF THE IMAGINARY” (Mazin, 2012, p. 154) where the slang term “*bablo*” meaning “loot, dough” had come to represent ‘money’ in Russian day-to-day life. Mazin explores effectively how the individual is turned and tamed *orally* by the dangling prospect of riches and the promotion of the need to accumulate wealth: “Man was turned into a biological organism with an instinctive love of money, itself transfigured into a kind of mother’s milk for adults” (Mazin, 2012, p. 155). Are social and environmental factors – here the introduction of capitalism – conducting the kind of biologizing



process – bringing out or heightening an oral need – that Fenichel, Bennett, and Borneman were dissecting with regard to *anal*ity?

From Mazin's account it seems that rapid and overwhelming social transformation, such as took place in formerly Marxist-Leninist Russia, has the strong potential to *turn* man, *transform* man, or *revert* man into a psychically biological frame of mind with regard to the desire for certain objects. Fenichel highlighted his ambivalence over instinct versus social structuring by stating, crucially, that: "Every psychological event is to be explained as the resultant of an interplay between biological structure and the influences exerted upon it by the environment" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 93).

By the mid-1990s in Russia, financially corrupt behaviour became not only acceptable but praiseworthy and admirable as "the entire country had been afflicted with commercial psychosis" and: "People who in previous times had been called economic criminals, speculators and underground moneylenders were now praised as a new class of the successful, lucky and smart" (Mazin, 2012, p. 154). Into being came "a new Russian ethics, in which the central place of the Good was occupied by Money" (Mazin, 2012, p. 155).

Mazin's paper highlights what will in due course emerge as the core concern of the present thesis: *Could 'money' become as mother's milk, that is, as food, for adults who have unleashed or unrepressed an urge to get rich? Could the pursuit of 'wealth' be oral, not anal, psychically? Does 'the biological' force its return under pressure from the social or the environment – like the return of the repressed?*

Mazin stated that a "savage money" culture had come into existence in post-Soviet Russia. He asserted with strong Kleinian overtones of the mother's breast as a part-object that: "*Bablo*, sucks human beings the way the breast sucks the mother's body" (Mazin, 2012, p. 155). But could the pursuit of 'wealth' be oral *and also* sourced to ideological structuring? Fenichel acknowledges in the very title of his paper, 'The Drive to Amass Wealth', that an instinct *could* be at play and posits that possibility directly. He examined the interplay between biological instinct and ideologically founded economic systems as people tried to amass wealth. This dynamic could be important whether one is considering communist

state systems or capitalist ones or states in transition or emergence. What could be the nature of particular instinctual conflicts – whether oral or anal based – that are expressed in particular historical and social contexts with regard to ‘money’ and ‘wealth’? In this area there is much potential for the exploration of the psychoanalytic roots of financial corruption. But so far what is observable is that psychoanalysis is only providing a key to the door of anality for its theories on ‘money’. The question, even demand, that is now beginning to force itself to the surface is this: *Surely work has to be done on orality?*

With only its single hypothesis of anality, it can be argued strongly that psychoanalysis has not yet conceptualized adequate psychoanalytic theories of ‘money’ and the accumulation of ‘wealth’ that would situate financial corruption within a psychoanalytic architecture that would contribute towards understanding why and how someone *could* become financially corrupt in certain social contexts, and what, *unconsciously*, could be the underpinnings of the behaviour.

*What is at work psychoanalytically* when a bureaucrat or a politician or a businessman in an “emerging”, “developing” country is confronted with the sudden availability of a huge amount of money? There it is: the possibility of millions in international currency that is his for the taking. What conscious and unconscious processes are taking place inside that person? What is making that person decide that he can take that money, that he is entitled to it, that it belongs to him, and that it is his alone? What is at the root of his desire for that money? What urge is he attempting to satisfy? What forces are prevailing upon him to commit what amounts to an act of aggression? What kind of a person does he become in doing such a thing? What is his unconscious relationship to the thought of such a large sum of money? What factors have structured his conscious and unconscious phantasies about ‘wealth’ and the acquiring of ‘wealth’? He must have that money even though in taking it he is committing a serious crime. Indeed, he could be said to be committing several crimes, not just theft but crimes against his people and his country.

It is with the theoretical support, theoretical challenges, and contextual societal observations of both classical and contemporary psychoanalytic work, of the type and nature that have been noted in the previous sections of this chapter, that progress towards a psychoanalytic discourse on financial corruption will be achieved. This discourse will be based carrying out a psychoanalytic textual analysis of chosen writings on corruption from a particular historical period. These texts will be chosen from 1960s' writings on Africa, Nigeria in particular. As explored earlier, philosophical support for a decision to visit the texts from the 1960s would also come from the Derridean demand for the need of a return to archaeological beginnings and to start the process of detangling and unbinding there.

## **12. Indicative Writings from the 1960's**

The period of the 1960s has been chosen because this is when financial corruption in the "Third World", as the newly independent and modernizing countries were known, began to assume international importance and became the focus of academic studies. The aim of this study is to analyze the roots of a problem psychoanalytically and this is the period in which those roots were planted and the shoots began to emerge. This is the 'archaeological' period in question. But, as we have seen, one could also have taken the example of post-Soviet countries like Russia since the 1990s, or, indeed, the example of the economic modernization of China since the 1980s. However, for decades in Africa, but particularly since the 1960s, the problem of financial corruption has loomed as intractable, impenetrable, and destructive. The discourses and narratives on corruption have fought for dominance in the coverage of Africa with those on poverty and lack of economic development. Texts that have come to the fore include: Wraith and Simpkins, 1963; Bayley, 1966; Nye, 1967; Klitgaard, 1988; Mauro, 1995. Texts from and about the 1960s will act as a portal, the door through which we shall examine the domain, the territory, *psychoanalytically*.

By the 1990s financial corruption had come to be regarded as *the* cause of Africa's status as the poorest continent in the world. Whilst financial corruption is a worldwide phenomenon, as we have stated, and therefore not unique to Africa, it is of particular concern in Africa because of the duality of Africa's existence as a continent vastly rich in resources and yet still the poorest continent in the world economically. The decades have witnessed the stealing of huge amounts of public money and the looting of national treasuries for private and personal gain. Such activities have been claimed as the main reason for the lack of economic development in African countries over the last fifty years (World Bank, 2010; Agbibo, 2012).

It might be appropriate here to make an attempt at a definition of financial corruption. Most of the general research work on corruption takes place in the fields of law, economics, economic development, criminology, and sociology, (for example, Rose-Ackerman, 1975, 2010; Shleifer and Vishny, 1993; Tanzi and Davoodi, 1997; Svensson, 2003; Fan, Lin, and Treisman, 2009; Van der Ploeg, 2011; Ruggiero, 2012). However, in the 1960s, as the academic study of corruption established itself, Professor Joseph Nye provided one of the definitions that were being attempted in order to capture as much as possible the complexity of what corruption was or could be regarded as being. Nye's definition later developed in a condensed form into a widely used template. His original statement was that:

Corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence.

(Nye, 1967)

The most commonly used definitional forms today are: "*the abuse of public office for private gain*" or "*the misuse of public office for private gain*". According to Transparency International UK, a chapter of "the world's leading non-governmental anti-corruption organisation" that has "unparalleled global

understanding and influence”, corruption per se can be defined as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It hurts everyone whose life, livelihood or happiness depends on the integrity of people in a position of authority” (Transparency International, 2010).

Financial corruption can be regarded as the taking and giving of bribes, that is, money. An attempt at a definition could be: *‘Financial corruption: the abuse of power, privilege, influence, or legal access, for personal monetary gain’*. By the mid-1990s the president of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, was able to state: “And let's not mince words: we need to deal with the cancer of corruption. In country after country, it is the people who are demanding action on this issue. They know that corruption diverts resources from the poor to the rich” (Wolfensohn, 1996).

### **13. A Particular Type of Greed?**

Some texts written in the 1960s might seem gratingly old-fashioned in attitudes, approach, and language, but we are including them in its research because the investigation is into how ‘something’ that is ‘corrupt behaviour’ *may* have developed at a given time, and thus works expressing and documenting the attitudes of those *past* times are actually necessary for any attempt at an analysis. The classic text provoking such a viewpoint would be Ronald Wraith’s and Edgar Simpkins’s book *Corruption in Developing Countries*, published in 1963. The country they examined was Nigeria, because they lived there, but the authors say that it was much the same across Africa:

In Africa corruption flourishes as luxuriantly as the bush and the weeds which it so much resembles, taking the goodness from the soil and suffocating the growth of plants which have been carefully, and expensively, bred and tended. The forces ranged against it are negligible; not negligible in fire or indignation or idealism, but quite simply negligible in weight. The calm and balanced attitude, which is held by those who live in Britain rather than in new countries themselves, is, to say the least, inadequate ... the comforting belief that given a free hand Africans today will behave like Englishmen a century ago.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, pp. 12-13)

Wraith and Simpkins describe corruption as a “disease” (1963, p. 12) chiming with what Wolfensohn was to call a “cancer” more than thirty years later. David Bayley (1966) in ‘The Effects of Corruption in a Developing Nation’, takes issue with Wraith and Simpkins for stipulating that the corrupt man must also feel guilt. According to Bayley: “A man may act wrongly even though he is not conscious of acting wrongly. His lack of guilt feelings may have a bearing upon his guilt in law but surely does not affect society’s definition of what constitutes improper or illicit action” (Bayley, 1966, p. 721). Bayley’s perception that a person can act wrongly without being aware of it is, knowingly or unknowingly, a psychoanalytic perspective. For Bayley: “The Western observer is faced with an uncomfortable choice” in “developing non-Western societies” whose “existing moral codes do not agree with Western norms as to what kinds of behaviour by public servants should be condemned” (Bayley, 1966, p. 721).

The corrupt act binds those participating in it in a *secretive bond* and creates a *secretive atmosphere*. Corrupt acts are therefore acts that *must not be known about or become known*. They are *hidden acts carried out by secretive actors*. An act that they must not bring to the consciousness of others – or, perhaps, even to themselves. If asked they must *lie* about the carrying out of such an act. For the secretive act to be brought into public consciousness, brought into reality, the corrupt person must be *found out*. One wonders: Do they lie to themselves, too?

Today, as more and more people become rich at the same time as more and more people remain in or sink into poverty; as the rigidities of the systems enabling wealth to be acquired become even more rigid economically and culturally, at the same time as they enable flexibilities and opportunities for enrichment, an opportune time has arrived to attempt a theoretical modelling of the basic psychoanalytic frameworks that are being dealt with when one examines the psychoanalytic relations between ‘money’, ‘wealth’, the unconscious, and financial corruption. Accordingly, here we reach the principal aim of that we have set ourselves in this research study: to make a serious contribution to the

growing body of work concerned with psychoanalysis and 'money', 'wealth', and 'finance'.

#### **14. Preliminary Conclusions**

What has been learned by the end of this chapter? First, let us reiterate what the research study is about: The aim is to investigate occurrences of financial corruption in a particular historical period in Africa through the lens of psychoanalysis. We are proceeding from two the following assumptions: firstly, that financial corruption involves 'money'; and, secondly, that financial corruption involves often complex conscious and unconscious relations between the individual and 'money' and the individual and society. *Chapter One* has taken a journey through a landscape of literature that has involved the review of texts on psychoanalytic, economic, and philosophical theories on 'money' and 'wealth', and indicative texts on the terrain of corruption in 1960s' Africa.

It has become clear that the theoretical work carried out during the classical period of psychoanalytic writings deserves a strong focus because the conclusions the theorists reached then on 'money' and the unconscious have remained influential until this day. But this also gives rise to a major concern: in thinking about this writings, growing doubts have emerged about anality's adequacy as the sole theory of 'money' and thus the sole method of analysis with regard to 'money' that is available psychoanalytically.

There are strong grounds to support the view that there is something missing from the psychoanalytic theoretical work on 'money'. During the review of the literature a hypothesis emerged on what is missing and what can be done about that gap began to form itself, but further probing is necessary at this juncture. There should be further investigation into the existing psychoanalytic theory of 'money' that is based on anality in order to ascertain the precise grounds for concerns about its efficacy and potential for its deployment. This will form the basis for the following two chapters.

These follow on from the concerns arising from the groundwork of *Chapter One*. What have been the main thematic strands that have emerged? First, that there seem to be almost total dependency and focus on Freud's 1908 hypothesis

that links faeces and anality to 'money' in the unconscious. There have been only a few protests about this equation (Borneman, 1976; Bennett 2012; Fenichel, 1938), and much ambiguity (Fenichel, 1938). Secondly, conversations were and are held in the consulting room that focus on the subject of 'money' in a variety of ways from, for example, the payment of fees to symbolic displacements and affects (e.g. Berger and Newman, 2011; Mordin, 2012). But the question remains, as to what extent was the significance of 'money' in patients' accounts of their lives during the classical period reflected in the theoretical output of those years. What did patients from that time say during their clinical encounters? Further, what did the analysts and theorists tell each other in *private* about 'money' and what did those private communications reveal about 'money' and the unconscious? The vital task of *Chapters Two* and *Chapter Three* will therefore lie in exploring what psychoanalysis tells us about 'money' publicly and privately, delving into the theoretical formulations on 'money' in the former and on the significance of patients' and analysts' private accounts in the latter.

As briefly stated above, as the journey through the literature continued, what came into focus was that an *absence* of some thing, of some notion was beginning to insist. The hypothesis that began to take shape was that the absence in the writings was *orality*. Some psychoanalytic papers are starting to align 'money' with oral-related behaviour in dramatic social transformations such as post-Communist Russia (Mazin, 2012). But would it not be better to hold back a firm conclusion of a missing theoretical key until the terrain of *anal*ity and its equation with 'money' in the unconscious has been determined in greater detail? As for financial corruption, we will hold off exploring this area psychoanalytically until until we know more fully what is in and what is not in psychoanalysis's theoretical formulations on 'money'. If there is a key missing, then it has to be found or it has to be made, constructed, to enable the unlocking of the door. But any such missing key has to be determined from a scrutiny of the existing psychoanalytic theoretical texts on 'money'. Thus we will now proceed to a detailed examination of 'the anal theory of money', and Ferenczi (1914) will provide the basis from which to start.



## Chapter Two

### ON THE DELINEATION OF THE ANAL THEORY OF MONEY

This chapter will set out the theories of key psychoanalytic thinkers working during the classical period, which engaged with what they saw as at the root *unconscious* cause of neurotic complexes around the question of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’. Sándor Ferenczi’s work stands out for providing an initial, comprehensive, developmental pathway towards a deeper understanding. His writings, read together with those of Freud which were a clear reference and starting point for him, will provide the focus for an exploration into how *anal*ity developed into the central tenet for psychoanalytic theoretical speculations on ‘money’ and ‘wealth’. Ferenczi’s paper, ‘The Ontogenesis of the Interest in Money’ (Ferenczi, 1914), was the first psychoanalytic paper to place ‘money’ firmly in its title. It is an attempt to venture into psychoanalytic theoretical speculation about how a person develops an interest in money and its *psychical* connections, that is, its direct and indirect symbolization in other objects and other meanings, whether consciously or unconsciously.

In a paper on ‘Symbolism’ that combined work written between 1912 and 1913, Ferenczi conducted a general exploration of the constructed nature of symbols and their interpretations using as examples his own symbolizing interpretations of Sophocles’ Oedipus myth, notably the name Oedipus itself and the potency of the king’s self-blinding. He argued that with the compulsion of mankind down the centuries to manufacture symbols out of man’s myths and oral storytelling, it was important to remember that:

parallel with the tendency to give expression to psychical contents there is also an unconscious aim at bringing to presentation the mental ways of functioning that are operative in mastering these contents. Only this latter fusion then yields the perfected myth, which without foregoing any of its effect on men is transmitted unchanged for hundreds of years.

(Ferenczi, 1912-1913, pp. 266-267)

In his paper on the interest in 'money', Ferenczi relies heavily on Freud's 1908 paper 'Character and Anal Erotism' in order to set out his own arguments, and this chapter leaves his citations from Freud where he placed them, as Freud's paper is an important one for the classical psychoanalytic interpretations made on the subject of 'money'. The mental or cultural process of the formation of symbolic objects and the infantile developmental stage of anal erotism appear to provide the potential twin roots for the connection of the abstract notion of 'money' to the concrete realities of 'faeces' and 'dirt' in the much-used psychoanalytic symbolic equation that connects 'money' to faeces. If these are the twin sources, it will be important to examine the manner in which such a constructed symbolic equation was defended in psychoanalytic terms. What will also be considered is whether it also operates in the area of myth, or in idiomatic language use. An important area of enquiry into Ferenczi's work will centre on the putative psychic force of such a symbolic equation. How can faeces, dirt, filth – anal-erotically extracted – exist in a symbolic equation, however refined, abstracted, displaced, or converted, with something acknowledged as precious, treasured, valuable and valued as 'money'?

It is necessary to begin with a general enquiry into the way psychoanalytic pioneers wrote about the construction of symbols, their use and their interpretations. This enquiry is circumscribed by the material that was available to Ferenczi on the topic. Ferenczi died in 1933 and so could not have read the foundational French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (born in 1908) on the symbolic nature and structuring of mankind, for example, as his work started being published from the late 1940s. But Ferenczi did have on his doorstep, literally in Budapest itself, the formidable psychoanalytic ethnologist, Géza

Róheim, as both were members of the small close circle of the Hungarian psychoanalytical society whose output punched well above its weight. Róheim's prolific work ranged from his early output in the first decades of the twentieth century that focused on the customs, folktales and mythologies of Hungary to the customs, practices, myths and symbolisms of other countries and races, for example in Australia and more generally (for example, Róheim, 1925, 1932, 1934). In the foreword to an impressive collection of essays by leading psychoanalysts in honour of Róheim's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, Sandor Lorand states that Róheim "directed the attention of workers in the fields of anthropology and sociology to the importance and value to their work of the psychoanalytic contribution to the understanding of behaviour and cultural patterns", and that psychoanalysis in turn gained "the reinforcing and enriching findings of anthropology, demonstrating their importance to a more effective understanding of psychoanalysis. (Wilbur and Muensterberger, 1951, p. xi).

## **1. Forming Symbols**

In 1916 Ernest Jones, Ferenczi's fellow psychoanalytic pioneer, wrote a lengthy paper entitled 'The Theory of Symbolism' in which he sought to evaluate to place of symbols, their meanings and differing interpretations in psychoanalysis. Symbolic image making, particularly in neurotic dream work and dream interpretation, is never far from centre stage in this work but Jones does makes a reference to Ferenczi's earlier paper on symbolism noting the emphasis there on the repression of unconscious affects. This is a vital area for any discussion on the construction of symbols, and Jones concludes that the general theoretical "touchstone", was that: "Only what is repressed is symbolised; only what is repressed needs to be symbolised" (Jones, 1916, p. 116). Jones includes an extract (translated by Jones from the original German) of Otto Rank's and Hanns Sachs' 'Die Bedeutung der Psychoanalyse für die Geisteswissenschaften' (1913), ('The Significance of Psychoanalysis for the Human Sciences'), in which these two psychoanalysts from the first generation of pioneers set out an excellent and comprehensive psychoanalytic definition of the term 'Symbol':

A final means of expression of repressed material, one which lends itself to very general use on account of its especial suitability for disguising the unconscious and adapting it (by compromise formations) to new contents of consciousness, is the Symbol. By this term we understand a special kind of indirect representation which is distinguished by certain peculiarities from the simile, metaphor, allegory, allusion, and other forms of pictorial presentation of thought material (after the manner of a rebus), to all of which it is related. The symbol represents an almost ideal union of all these means of expression: it is a substitutive, perceptual replacement-expression for something hidden, with which it has evident characteristics in common or is coupled by internal associative connections. Its essence lies in its having two or more meanings, as, indeed, it itself originated in a kind of condensation, an amalgamation of individual characteristic elements. Its tendency from the conceptual to the perceptual indicates its nearness to primitive thought; by this relationship symbolisation essentially belongs to the unconscious, though, in its function as a compromise, it in no way lacks conscious determining factors, which in varying degrees condition both the formation of symbols and the understanding for them.

(Rank & Sachs, 1913, cited in Jones, 1916, p. 96)

In a paper entitled 'Psychoanalysis and the Folk-tale' published in 1922 in the then recently established journal, the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Géza Róheim references Jones's study as he affirms that: "By symbol we mean a substitute for something we are not conscious of, for a repressed unconscious concept" (Róheim, 1922, p. 182). Further, in response to a critic on the subject of universal symbolism, he states that:

When the analyst has obtained the same solution to the same problem on  $x$  occasions he will expect to find it again in case  $x + 1$ , and if the dagger proves to be a substitute for the penis in a hundred dreams, it is very likely that it will mean the same in the hundred and first. This is what is meant by 'universal symbols'

(Roheim, 1922, p. 182)

But despite Róheim's confidence in this matter, it is insufficient, as one could counter that it might depend on *who* those 100 people were in the first place: are they all the same *kind* of people, from the same ethnological background, and

how important or not would the factor of ethnicity and cultural valuations be for the “value of the symbolic interpretation when applied” (Róheim, 1922, p. 182), whether for the folk-tale or for the dream? Such questions would have consequences for our analysis and complicate notions of symbolic equivalence.

Jones designated symbols as forms of “indirect figurative representation” (Jones, 1916, p. 90), but stipulated that “true symbolism” was to be differentiated from the plethora of ways of representing something figuratively – for example, the use of similes and metaphors – primarily because true symbolism had to comprise of not only the characteristics possessed by, say, similes and metaphors, but, in addition, be further in possession of specific attributes. Primarily, true symbolism had to have the quality of being, of existence, that was the unconscious representation of a repressed affect, “and the individual is quite unaware of the meaning of the symbol he has employed; indeed, is often unaware of the fact that he has employed one at all, since he takes the symbol for reality” (Jones, 1916, p. 97). It could be considered that it would not be going too far to state that psychoanalysis would be crippled without the associations and interpretations that rely heavily on powerful symbols and the ability to symbolize. An attempt at a catch-all definition of ‘symbol’, ‘symbolic’, could be: *‘come to render the meaning of’*.

The primacy of Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) as the standard bearer for the initial exploration of symbol usage and interpretations in psychoanalytic therapeutic work was unchallenged particularly in the period of psychoanalysis that forms the focus of the early chapters on this thesis, and this is underlined in Jones’s paper; but Karl Abraham’s clinical work also provides very good examples and thinking with regard to interpretations of psychoanalytic usages. For an example in that which relates to an attitude towards the concept of having and losing money, here is Abraham in ‘Manifestations of the Female Castration Complex’ (1920):

This patient, whose libido was very strongly fixated on her father, once had a short dream before her marriage, which she related to me in very remarkable words. She said that in the dream her father had

been run over and had 'lost some leg or other and his money'. The castration idea is here not only expressed by means of the leg but also by the money. Being run over is one of the most frequent castration symbols.

(Abraham, 1920, p. 356)

In an intriguing footnote the translator notes that the German word used by Abraham for 'money', "*Vermögen*", also has the meanings of "capacity" and "sexual potency". This is useful to note for the possibilities of alternative interventions and openings in the discussion of the derivation of a symbolizing structure for 'money' and the resulting potential for alternative views and thinking on the possible theoretical consequences for how we understand 'money' and the mind and financial corruption.

In an example from Abraham's 'A Short Study of the Development of the Libido, Viewed in the Light of Mental Disorders' (1924), a patient reveals how his unconscious anxiety about the loss of 'money' manifests itself during his bouts of depression:

This patient told me one day that he had noticed a curious tendency that he had during his states of depression. At the beginning of those states he used to go about with his head lowered, so that his eyes were fixed on the ground rather than on the people about him. He would then begin to look with compulsive interest to see whether any mother-of-pearl buttons were lying in the street. If he found one he would pick it up and put it in his pocket. He rationalized this habit by saying that at the beginning of his depression he had such a feeling of inferiority that he had to feel glad if he even so much as found a button in the street; for he did not know whether he would ever again be capable of earning enough money to buy the least thing for himself. In the wretched condition he was in, he said, even those objects which other people left about must have a considerable value for him.

(Abraham, 1924, pp. 444-445)

It is interesting to note that the patient's state in which he symbolically equates 'money' with buttons involves a connective association, one which Ferenczi would theorise in 1914 in his outline of the stages of development for the infantile processing of the symbolization of 'money'. In the above example it is of clinical note that such symbolization of "button" for 'money' does indeed take place. However, it is also interesting to note that it was specifically "*mother-of-pearl*" buttons that the patient sought, given the primary role in the infantile stages privileged by maternal nurturing and maternal provision. One must also mark the fact that mother-of-pearl buttons are expensive. The patient was not looking for any old buttons, for these were reminders of his unconscious fear of poverty and becoming impoverished; he was looking for buttons that incurred expense, ones whose outward appearance revealed that costliness; ones in which it was clear that money had *already* been spent. This is arguably evidentially supportive of the proposition that 'money' has *already* been symbolized in the patient's unconscious in some form prior to the search for buttons. The question is whether this internal symbolic structuring *is* the linear developmental symbolic structuring, from 'faeces' to 'money', that Ferenczi, in line with classical psychoanalysis, outlines.

What Ferenczi will be attempting to do in his paper on the interest in money is to theoretically structure the symbolic meanings of an abstract notion – 'money'. And he was going to attempt to construct such a symbolization from the ground up: to pull together a symbolic structure for an abstract notion based on language, idiom, common notions, and traditional beliefs. In using these tools he would be adhering to the formal construction processes of symbol formation. In the following section we will be looking at the manner in which he delineated "the development of the money symbol" (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 327), and crucially, at the manner in which he negotiated potential – and possibly actual – fault lines.

## **2. Embarking on the Road Towards a Psychoanalytic Theory of 'Money'**

From the outset Ferenczi implies in his paper that an interest in money could possibly be sourced to a combination of inherited and individual tendencies, that is, both phylogenetic and ontogenetic, and he notes that

psychoanalysis had not yet, at the time of his writing, the means to examine how such a combination developed in fusion. "Analysis has still to perform the task of separately investigating the phylogenesis and ontogenesis of symbolism, and then establishing their mutual relation". Further: "individual experiences are necessary as well as the congenital disposition, these providing the real material for the construction of the symbol" (Ferenczi, 1914, pp. 319-320). He sets out his stall by posing this question:

I wish here to examine the question of whether, and to what extent, individual experience favours the transformation of anal-erotic interest into interest in money.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 320)

But what does he mean by "individual experience" and how is he using the terms "anal-erotic" and "transformation"? The discussion begins initially, as is frequent in Ferenczi's work, with reference to Freud:

Every psychoanalyst is familiar with the symbolic meaning of money that was discovered by Freud "Wherever the archaic way of thinking has prevailed or still prevails, in the old civilisations, in myths, fairy-tales, superstition, in unconscious thinking, in dreams, and in neuroses, money has been brought into the closest connection with filth."

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 320)

Therefore, according to Ferenczi, Freud not only discovered the "symbolic meaning of money", but the creator of psychoanalysis also aligned and underlined this symbolic meaning with archaic references in order to highlight 'money's alleged psychic associations in the human mind with dirt and faeces. The symbolic meaning of 'money' is thus established at the outset of Ferenczi's paper as being "filth". The phrase "filthy lucre" meaning 'money' is still in usage today in English-speaking parts of the world.



That quotation from Freud comes from his 1908 paper on character traits of anal-erotic organizations. Ferenczi points out that Freud's linkage of strong anal eroticism in infants to the formation of miserly characteristics when adulthood is reached is a consequence of the symbolism of the linkage between "filth" and 'money':

As an individual-psychological phenomenon parallel with this fact Freud asserts that an intimate association exists between the strongly marked erogenicity of the anal zone in childhood and the character trait of miserliness that develops later. ...

In the case of persons who later on were especially tidy, economical, and obstinate, one learns from the analytic investigation of their early childhood that they were of that class of infants "who refuse to empty the bowel because they obtain an accessory pleasure from defaecation", who even in the later years of childhood "enjoyed holding back the stools", and who recall "having occupied themselves in their childhood in all sorts of unseemly ways with the evacuated material." "The most extensive connections seem to be those existing between the apparently so disparate complexes of defaecation and interest in money."

(Ferenczi, 1914, pp. 320-321)

But surely the question remains as to *why* is there such a linkage, supposedly both consciously and unconsciously, between 'money' and 'filth', 'dirt', 'faeces'. This may have required expanding the field of enquiry into the world of the philosophers, economists, novelists, and theologians. But Freud does not venture in the direction of the non-psychoanalytical social world, as, in typically persuasive fashion, he writes, as cited by Ferenczi, this:

Observation of the behaviour of children and analytic investigation of neurotics allow us now to establish some single points on the line along which the idea of the most valuable thing that a man possesses (money) is developed in the individual into a symbol "of the most worthless thing, which a man casts aside as dejecta."

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 321)

One cannot but note Freud's categorical statement that money is "the most valuable thing that a man possesses". Ferenczi goes on to state that:

children originally devote their interest without any inhibition to the process of defaecation, and [that] it affords them pleasure to hold back their stools. The excrementa thus held back are really the first "savings" of the growing being, and as such remain in a constant, unconscious inter-relationship with every bodily activity or mental striving that has anything to do with collecting, hoarding, and saving.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 321)

Thus the first staging post has been reached on the road to constructing a symbolic equation that links psychically the "most valuable thing" with "the most worthless thing". But what still remains to be understood is the general process that takes place in the manufacture of a symbolic object, and the reason and manner in which we use our bodies in this process.

### **3. Symbolizing the Desired Object or Idea**

The projection of the body, body organs, and bodily functions onto desired objects as a means of symbol formation is a common feature of psychoanalytic case histories. What is observable is the symbolizing of the desired object by the patient's use of the mechanism of projecting body organs onto that desired object. In other words, equating – that is, linking in measurable amounts, strongly to weakly – a particular body part with a particular object of desire, and creating a symbolic equation as a result of that process. But the question is: *why* is this done? Why is such a mechanism triggered? What would be the benefit to the mind in accessing, or trying to access, that desired object by utilizing such a method? Ferenczi attempts to answer this quandary in his paper on 'Symbolism' (written over two years):

The symbolic identification of external objects with bodily organs makes it possible to find again, on the one hand, all the wished-for objects of the world in the individual's body, on the other hand, the treasured organs of the individual's body in objects conceived in an animistic manner.

(Ferenczi, 1912-1913, p. 275)

This is a crucial point, as Ferenczi's highly plausible argument is that symbolism is rooted in the need to believe that infantile wishes are being fulfilled. Ferenczi puts forward in his paper 'Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality' (1913) that the need to symbolize emerges out of the infant's passage through a series of developmental stages that begin in infancy with omnipotent desire that must have satisfaction and is ignorant of (or deliberately ignores) reality, to the developmental stage where forced realization of an outer world of reality dawns. This is an outer reality that is able to deny satisfaction of desires and thus curtails omnipotence without completely restricting the agency of the child's ego. In making this argument Ferenczi reinforces the animistic nature of such pathways and processes:

Everything points to the conclusion that the child passes through an *animistic period* in the apprehension of reality, in which every object appears to him to be endowed with life, and in which he seeks to find again in every object his own organs and their activities.

(Ferenczi, 1913, p. 227)

And, it could be added, to invest psychically in those other objects the strength of feeling, repressed or unrepressed, conscious or unconscious, towards his or her own body organs or bodily functions. Infantile desire has to be at least addressed in some manner, even if that manner is to repress such wishes – particularly those concerned with sexuality and sexual arousals – or to displace the energies

excited onto other objects or other much safer, less obviously psychically exciting and sexually charged parts of the body.

I imagine that this symbolic equating of genital organs with other organs and with external objects originally happens only in a playful way, out of exuberance, so to speak. The equations thus arising, however, are secondarily made to serve repression, which seeks to weaken one member of the equation, while it symbolically over-emphasizes the other, more harmless one by the amount of the repressed affect. In this way the upper half of the body, as the more harmless one, attains its sexual – symbolic significance, and so comes about what Freud calls “Displacement from below upwards”.

(Ferenczi, 1912-1913, p. 275)

An example of how a modern symbolizing interpretation of an erogenous zone can emerge out of ancient mythologies is provided by Ferenczi in his note entitled ‘On the Symbolism of the Head of the Medusa’, written in 1923, about the mythological figure’s terrifying head. According to the Greek myth:

Perseus roamed throughout the world and performed marvels, of which the most famous was the slaying of the snake-haired monster Medusa, one of the three Gorgons. Her hair had been beautiful once, but she had been ravished by Neptune – in the temple of Minerva who, in punishment, turned Medusa’s locks into snakes. Guided to the Gorgon by the aged daughters of Phorcys – who shared one eye between them – Perseus passed through lands filled with the rigid shapes of animals and men, who had looked upon Medusa’s face and been turned to stone. Perseus, on the other hand, gazed at her only in the reflection of his bronze shield, and this enabled him to overcome and slay her. He cut off her head

(Grant, 1962, p. 346)

Ferenczi’s commentary on this myth provides a good example of the developmental pathway and relationship between a mythic story and the potential for a symbolizing interpretation hundreds of years later. He also

references again Freud's point about the displacement of charged, sexualized, psychic energy from its focus on the lower half of the body:

The analysis of dreams and associations have repeatedly brought me to interpret the head of the Medusa as the terrible symbol of the female genital region, the details of which are displaced 'from below upwards'. The many serpents which surround the head might, according to representation by the opposite, signify the absence of penis, and horror itself is the repetition of the frightful impression made on the child by the sighting of the genital organs deprived of a penis (castrated). The fearful and alarming staring eyes of the Medusa's head have also the secondary meaning of erection.

(Ferenczi, 1923, p. 219)

#### **4. Symbolizing in General**

Can a person symbolize a feeling, an emotion (particularly if one is trying to repress such a feeling or emotion)? Can one symbolize an action, an idea, a colour? Ferenczi explained that symbolization takes place in order for the belief to take hold that wishes are being sated, that we are satisfied – even if that is not the case in reality. For Ferenczi it appears that bodies are used to help in the process of symbolization because our bodies are ourselves: we have unique access to them. Effort is put into the usage of bodies or body parts – and the manipulation of the strength of feeling about them – in order to pretend that access has been gained to some thing or some object through the mechanism of the creation of a symbolic equation. In reality there is no direct access to that thing or object, but one can represent, associate, or project that which is symbolized onto *some other* thing or object. However, thinking or fantasizing symbolically, using symbolic equations – particularly when this is done unconsciously (with the free flowing tools of the unconscious such as condensation, displacement, reversal) – does not necessarily have to make use psychically of the body or body parts. Ferenczi notes that:

There can be no doubt that the child (like the unconscious) identifies two things on the basis of the slightest resemblance, displaces affects

with ease from one to the other, and gives the same name to both. Such a name is thus the highly condensed representative of a large number of fundamentally different individual things, which, however, are in some way or other (even if ever so distantly) similar and are for this reason identified. Advance in the knowledge of reality (intelligence) then manifests itself in the child in the progressive resolution of such condensation-products into their elements, in learning to distinguish from one another things that are similar in one respect but otherwise different.

(Ferenczi, 1912-1913, pp. 276-277)

Further, Ferenczi rules out the theoretical possibility that entities such as metaphors and allegories be given the psychoanalytic weight of being termed and treated as if they were symbols. Ferenczi makes the highly important observation that to be a symbol something unknown and, in a sense, unwise and irrational and out of place, must be *felt in the unconscious* with regard to, that is, in relation to, in an equation with, something else that manifests as an object, an idea, a representation.

similes, allegories, metaphors, allusions, parables, emblems, and indirect representations of every sort might also in a certain sense be conceived as products of this lack of sharpness in distinction and definition, and yet they are not – in the psychoanalytical sense – symbols. Only such things (or ideas) are symbols in the sense of psychoanalysis as are invested in consciousness with a logically inexplicable and unfounded affect, and of which it may be analytically established that they owe this affective over-emphasis to *unconscious* identification with another thing (or idea), to which the surplus of affect really belongs. Not all similes, therefore, are symbols, but only those in which the one member of the equation is repressed into the unconscious.

(Ferenczi, 1912-1913, pp. 277-278)

The strength of the affect aroused by the symbol is equal to the strength of the energy required to repress what has been repressed, that is, what is unconscious, which the symbol is replacing in consciousness. It is clear that there has to be what can be regarded as a *symbolizing moment*, or series of moments, that is, a series of *symbolizing events* – what Ferenczi calls “cultural education” (Ferenczi,

1912-1913, p. 280) – during which the ‘equation’ is struck for the first time (or incrementally) and placed, repressed, into the unconscious accompanied by the strength of the affect, or its potential strength

We have reached a key point in our exploration of these early psychoanalytic theorisations of the symbolic equations at work around the question of ‘money’.

A series of questions insist: How does the child or, indeed, the adult, *transform* such a chain of connections between dirt and the process of becoming clean, and *transfer* them symbolically to an inanimate object, an abstract conception, such as ‘money’? And when does the symbolizing, transferable, moment occur when the child forms the symbolic equation in his mind that *another* object – in this instance ‘money’ – is related to ‘dirt’ or *becomes* ‘dirt’? Is it a single symbolizing moment, or is it an accumulation over a period of time of such transferable, symbolizing moments during which the equating symbolic attachments are cathected to an object? What determines such processing in the mind: psychic infantile development or “cultural education”? These problematics are at the core of this study’s criticisms of Ferenczi’s theoretical work on “the interest in money” and of the anal theory of money generally.

## **5. Symbolizing ‘Money’**

Let us return to the first staging post, that first direct linkage between ‘money’ and financial affairs and acts of behaviour that involve attitudes towards faeces. It warrants repeating:

children originally devote their interest without any inhibition to the process of defaecation, and [that] it affords them pleasure to hold back their stools. The excrementa thus held back are really the first “savings” of the growing being, and as such remain in a constant, unconscious inter-relationship with every bodily activity or mental striving that has anything to do with collecting, hoarding, and saving.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 321)

Via a process of introjection, that is, a process of internalization, the faeces become a “sort of object-love” for the child (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 321), but one that he is severely reprimanded over for playing with, and he turns to substitutes:

As the child’s sense of cleanliness increases – with the help of paedagogic measures – street-mud also becomes objectionable to him. Substances which on account of their stickiness, moistures, and colour are apt to leave traces on the body and clothing become despised and avoided as “dirty things”. The symbol of filth must therefore undergo a further distortion, a dehydration. The child turns its interest to sand, a substance which, while the colour of earth, is cleaner and dry. The instinctive joy of children in gathering up, massing together, and shaping sand is subsequently rationalised and sanctioned by the adults, whom it suits to see an otherwise unruly child playing with sand for hours, - and they declare this playing to be “healthy”, *i.e.* hygienic. None the less this play-sand also is nothing other than a copro-symbol – deodorised and dehydrated filth.

(Ferenczi, 1914, pp. 322-323)

Here, “filth” has been introduced as a symbol, according to Ferenczi. But a symbol for what? How can “filth” become other than what it directly represents, that is, “dirty things”? When a child is told that something is “filthy” or “dirty”, it is normally in association with the child himself having to be cleansed of whatever it is that has made him appear dirty to his parent or carer; and the child will note, or be led to note, that such and such is “dirty” in that it leaves marks or stains and produces “things” either on him or his clothes or in his surroundings that have to be cleaned.

As has already been elaborated in this chapter, for psychoanalysis a symbol has to be in a relation with a ‘thing’. So far this has not yet happened in Ferenczi’s account. In the child’s mind “dirt” is still in relation to itself as “dirt”, in other words, ‘dirt is dirty’. Perhaps the child can extend the relation to him or her self *personally*, as in “I am dirty”, because if ‘dirt is dirty’, and he is being told that he is “dirty” because he has got ‘dirt’ on him, the child can probably deduce that this could mean that *he* is ‘dirty’, *too*, because of the dirt on him from faeces or mud



or other dirty playthings that he is being reprimanded (frequently) about. Continuing with Ferenczi's delineation we find that:

Progress in the sense of cleanliness then gradually makes even sand unacceptable to the child, and the infantile stone age begins: the collecting of pebbles, as prettily shaped and coloured as possible, in which a higher stage in the development of replacement-formation is attained. The attributes of evil odour, moisture, and softness are represented by those of absence of odour, dryness, and now also hardness. We are reminded of the real origin of this hobby by the circumstance that stones – just as mud and sand – are gathered and collected from the *earth*. The capitalistic significance of stones is already quite considerable. (Children are “stone-rich” in the narrow sense of the word.)

(Ferenczi, 1914, pp. 325-326)

Ferenczi has determined that the symbolic equation that connects ‘faeces-filth’ to ‘money’ comes into existence through a placement on the infantile developmental path from faeces to small, solid objects that is explored and exploited by the small, growing child. Then:

After stones comes the turn of artificial products, and with these the detachment of the interest from the earth is complete. Glass marbles, buttons, fruit pips, are eagerly collected – this time no longer only for the sake of their intrinsic value, but as measures of value, so to speak as primitive coins, converting the previous barter exchange of children into an enthusiastic money exchange. The character of capitalism, however, not purely practical and utilitarian, but libidinous and irrational, is betrayed in this stage also: the child decidedly enjoys the collecting in itself.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 326)

Thus Ferenczi has determined further that the child makes *himself* into a “character of capitalism”, but is this correct? Ferenczi has provided a series of transferable symbolizing moments along the infantile developmental path: from

playing with faeces (dirt), to playing with mud and sand (dirt), and then the momentous symbolic displacements of the collecting of stones. There is then the even further refined abstraction of the bartering of “artificial products” like marbles. The climax is approached with the conversion of earlier bartering practices into the trading of these “artificial objects” and the using of them as “measures of value” in an “enthusiastic money exchange”. Ferenczi provides the empirical evidence of idiom (“stone rich”) together with the observation about bartering (the trading of marbles and cards was certainly carried out “enthusiastically” in school playgrounds). All these ‘things’ – sand, stones, marbles, etc. – would be what Ferenczi would describe as coprophilic objects and copro-symbols in the anal theory of money. This mechanism of conversion into copro-symbols provides the underpinning of the connection of ‘money’ with faeces.

Finally, Ferenczi takes the climatic “one more step” of making “the identification of faeces with gold” (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 326):

Soon even stones begin to wound the child’s feeling of cleanliness – he longs for something purer – and this is offered to him in the shining pieces of money

(Ferenczi, 1914, pp. 326-327)

The climax has been reached. But, it is ultimately not one that satisfies, since as we will go on to explain, there is much that remains unpersuasive in Ferenczi’s (following Freud’s) line of argumentation. In effect, Ferenczi’s final step, the climatic identification with gold, is not a “step” but rather can be seen as an imaginative leap. And although psychoanalysis attends to and concerns itself with the imagination in its multiple structurings and forms and can defend its right to make leaps of the imagination, surely, for example, the stones’ “wound” to the child’s “feeling of cleanliness” is speculation and should be characterized as such. Even Freud himself admitted to “often far-fetched speculation, which the reader will consider or dismiss according to his individual predilection” (Freud,

1920, p. 24), as he worked out his ideas. Is this a “wound” of castration or a narcissistic injury? If it is supposed to be castration, is Ferenczi suggesting that some form of castration has taken place caused by the child’s proximity to dirt and faeces? This is an intriguing and potentially important consideration but it is not explored. However, this chapter has been devoted to a careful consideration of the symbolic relation between anality and a psychoanalytic theory of money because the far more serious disappointment with the anal theory of money that we find ourselves faced with now, lies in its failing to fulfil its own stated and necessary remit of being truly *unconscious*.

## **6. Conclusion: Failing the Requirement of a Symbolic Equation.**

An object is awarded its symbolic rendering as a representational value object consciously or unconsciously in place of some other thing or meaning. What is being argued in this study is that the accumulated representations or accumulated meanings attached to a particular object can often lead to that object symbolizing whatever we want it to symbolize. It is still *an assumption only* that the anally erotized developmental lineage outlined above by Ferenczi provides the connective symbolic equation upon which the hypothesis that ‘money’ equals faeces-filth-dirt can be founded upon. Objects such as stones and marbles and buttons may well be copro-symbols, but that does not mean that the child also has *a spontaneous, simultaneously unconscious psychic comprehension of them as a monetary means of value or exchange*. Surely such a situation would have to be in existence for any such symbolic equation linking ‘money’ with faeces to be warranted. Ferenczi himself, as already cited, stipulated the need for an *unconscious* affect. He stated crucially that the only symbols were those in which in consciousness there was: “a logically inexplicable and unfounded affect, and of which it may be analytically established that they owe this affective over-emphasis to *unconscious* identification with another thing (or idea), to which the surplus of affect really belongs” (Ferenczi, 1912-1913, pp. 277). Again, the point has to be raised that surely this has to be *a unilateral action* on the part of the child?

The argument being made is that Ferenczi's explanation of 'the anal theory of money', as detailed as it is, does not appear to provide satisfactory reasons for the upholding of the general psychoanalytic assumption that 'money equals faeces-filth' is the symbolic equation. The question has to be this: *Do children spontaneously, untutored, provide themselves, consciously or unconsciously, with the notions of monetary value and monetary exchange?* If 'money' is regarded as filth or dirt or as faeces, that could be for reasons other than those of an infantile trajectory that follows the child's curiosity from faeces to small objects like stones and marbles that have themselves become marked in some way or other with monetary value. The *child* would have no way of knowing that such small objects had or could have any such monetary value, and could not therefore assign any such symbolizing value or symbolic equation to the stones. Surely any "money exchange" that takes place in childhood tends to be an activity engaged upon by *older* children. In other words, children who have *already* been culturally rendered by adults into such knowledge about the role and place of 'money' in obtaining "things". Children who have been *taught* the value of 'money' and that "things" have to be paid for. There is the parental rhetoric of: "Don't you know how much that cost?", "We shall have to save for that", "If you're good, I'll buy you this as a present", etc. In other words, any such symbolic equation is a secondary one, moreover, one which is highly dependent on social and environmental influences. As such, as has been argued, it would fail the requirement of standing as a true symbolic equation in the terms outlined earlier in this chapter.

Ferenczi himself inadvertently provides support for this argument when discussing going coins in the hands of a child:

the high appreciation of which is naturally also in part due to the respect in which they are held by adults as well as to the seductive possibilities of obtaining through them everything that the child's heart can desire.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 327)

One could argue that *adults seduce children into the knowledge of the monetary value and usage of 'money' and of its status as "precious"*. And hence, as a result, *it is adults who produce the desire in children for 'money'*. This could be regarded as a process of seduction into what is regarded as necessary and vital cultural, societal, and economic knowledge. The child is *tutored* into knowledge and "high appreciation" of 'money', gold, and their values and usages. The child is *given* by the adult something *called* 'money': "offered to him in the shining pieces" (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 327), and then to all intents and purposes *mimics* his attitude to these shiny pieces based on direct copying or adaptations of the attitudes and behaviour of the adults towards the very same money-objects that he has been given. The child has no prior knowledge of what he can obtain with these things called 'money' – "seductive possibilities" or otherwise, desirable or not – until he sees how adults obtain *their* desires with 'money', or speak about obtaining their desires with it. Again, Ferenczi provides support for this view when he acknowledges that the child has no initial knowledge of the potential practical, economic power of 'money':

Originally, however, it is not these purely practical considerations that are operative, enjoyment in the playful collecting, heaping up, and gazing at the shining metal pieces being the chief thing, so that they are treasured even less for their economic value than for their own sake as pleasure-giving objects.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 327)

What is a consistent observation in the activities of *small* children in places where 'money' is exchanged for goods (for example in supermarkets) and where they *see* their parents handing over some 'thing' in return for goods, is this contradiction: when *they* see something that they want, they reach out their hand to take it, as if it were free of any cost or exchange value. This is an amusing sight to observe in shops with layouts that are easily accessible to pushchairs. Indeed, in Melanie Klein's powerful opening salvo, her first paper published in

the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* entitled 'The Development of a Child', the following point is made about the paper's subject, "Fritz", at the age of four:

Although he was often taken shopping, it seemed (from his questions) rather incomprehensible to him that one should not get things as a present from people who had a number of them, and it was very difficult to make him understand that things had to be paid for, and at various rates according to their value.

(Klein, 1923, pp. 420-421)

"Fritz" has a perspective that is an important illustration from nearly one hundred years ago (Klein first presented this paper in 1919) of children's attitudes that continue to be observed today in settings that bear no resemblance in any shape or form to early 20<sup>th</sup> century Berlin. "Fritz" is described as being for his age "normal" but a little slower in "mental development" than other children (Klein, 1923, p. 420). And although Klein sounds disapproving that he found it "very difficult" to understand that "things had to be paid for" – "Fritz" had to be *made* to understand this concept – this implies that other children perhaps had less of a difficult difficulty, but that nevertheless it was a problem pertaining to children and childhood that had to be tackled *by the adults*. 'Money' and 'paying for things' were concepts, ways of behaving, and of social attitudes that had to be *taught*.

It would seem, therefore, that 'the anal theory of money', although excellently delineated by Ferenczi, can be argued to be wanting in its hypothesis that claims a historically, socially, and culturally viable lineage for the symbolic equating of 'money' with faeces, dirt, filth that is *unconscious* and not the result of cultural education. It can be disputed that a symbolic equation has been adequately established in the anal theory of 'money' that fulfils its basic requirement of being *unconsciously rendered*. The challenge can be made that it is one thing to connect certain types of behaviour in adulthood to psychical fixations and developmental stages during infancy; it is another thing to make a claim for a

symbolic equation that has difficulty establishing its symbolic status, that is not truly unconscious.

It has become necessary to look towards other psychoanalytic alternatives for an *unconsciously derived* symbolic equation that could allow other meanings and the possibilities of other outcomes for the ways in which relations with 'money' are considered. We will proceed by investigating the following central proposition: What possibilities would result if the situation was turned the other way around, from below upwards, from bottom to top, and instead of anality we considered *orality*? We will turn to this in *Chapter Four*.

But, prior to setting off on that journey towards an alternative explanation for the roles that 'money' and 'wealth' might play in the unconscious, let us pause for a moment to consider more fully the other dominant theme that emerged from the psychoanalytic literature explored in *Chapter One*: the narratives and accounts that were presented to the psychoanalysts within the analytic setting and their own private personal communications with each other. Was the question of *orality* or the *oral developmental stage* considered there in relation to 'money'? Perhaps the question of orality *was* raised and considered but not expanded upon or explored theoretically in publications.

With the examination of these personal accounts in *Chapter Three*, both sides of the story – theoretical and clinical – would have been explored. This will enable a properly considered weighing up of the requirement for an elaboration of an *alternative* explanation for the relationship between 'money' and the unconscious. Focusing again on Ferenczi's work, let us now turn to the subject matter of what patients actually revealed to the analysts in the consulting room about the importance or not of 'money' in their lives and in their psyches.

## **Chapter Three**

### **THE COMPLEXITIES OF ‘MONEY’ IN THE CONSULTING ROOM**

It seems appropriate to begin a discussion of the narratives and themes that emerge from the stories told by patients to psychoanalysts concerning ‘money’, with Freud’s view about the status of this material:

An analyst does not dispute that money is to be regarded in the first instance as a medium for self-preservation and for obtaining power; but he maintains that, besides this, powerful sexual factors are involved in the value set upon it. He can point out that money matters are treated by civilized people in the same way as sexual matters – with the same inconsistency, prudishness and hypocrisy.

(Freud, 1913, p. 131)

Although Freud began his discourse on financial affairs in ‘On Beginning the Treatment’ (1913) with the emphases on ‘money’ and its “self-preservation” role, its “obtaining power” role, and the “powerful sexual factors” associated to it, the points are made as asides, despite their importance. He does not proceed to discuss these points at any length, albeit they are critical to an understanding of the societal and cultural impacts of ‘money’ and ‘wealth’ on people generally, whether those people are patients in analysis or not. The main component of his advice to fellow psychoanalysts regarding ‘money’ focuses upon the payment of their fees and the potential pitfalls of dealing with patients with regard to that. Arguably, as his paper is one in a series of papers on technique, Freud might have felt that this was not the right place to delve further into the symbolic or



theoretical meanings of 'money' for patients, or to enquire into how those meanings might emerge in the clinical encounter, consciously or in the unconscious. However, apart from his two papers that specifically relate 'money' to anal erotism, (Freud 1908, 1917), Freud does not devote any papers in subsequent years to the areas of self-preservation or sexual power or power relations in conjunction with 'money'. And, as shall be seen in this chapter, even when 'money' is referred to within the copious correspondences with other psychoanalysts, the main theorists on the subject of 'money' are usually writing with a concern about the maintenance of a certain level of income and standard of living. As analysts they did not dispute the vital importance of 'money'; but a criticism can also be added that as analysts they did not reflect such an importance in their theoretical outputs.

For Freud, 'money' in the consulting room was to be dealt with on two fronts: first, the priority was the consideration of what was described as a "regulating effect" in the psychoanalyst's dealings with his patients, that is, the enforcing of a practical, balanced, unemotional attitude – not predicated on gratitude as a result of free consultations – via the mechanism of having to pay the analyst for his time whether the hour was used or not. Second, there was to be frankness generally on the subject of financial payments. In 'On Beginning the Treatment' Freud makes it clear that the material existence of the psychoanalyst should on no account come under threat from events such as patients not being charged a high enough fee, from patients receiving free treatment, or by patients not making regular settlements of their bills. Psychoanalysts should not "sacrifice" their "living" with such practices. (Freud, 1913, pp. 131-133).

From today's perspectives, it is fascinating to realize the thoroughness of Freud's assessment of the pitfalls that the problematic area of patients' fees might entail. In contemporary psychoanalytic papers on the subject of 'money' and psychoanalysis, the majority appear to accept uncritically the status quo that privileges anality with regard to the theoretical development of the meaning of 'money' (e.g. Christopoulos, 2014; Dimen, 1994; Morante, 2010; Myers, 2008). Dimen's paper, 'Money, love and hate: Contradiction and paradox in psychoanalysis' is a good example of this. However, she does make the very valid

point, that Freud's statements on 'money' in 'On Beginning the Treatment' were made only five years after his 1908 paper on anal erotism, and therefore that his perspective is "only partially theorized ". Furthermore, she states that "his ideas on the psychosexuality of money, which predate his instructions about its handling in the clinical setting, in essence constitutes the sole intellectual frame for his practical considerations "(Dimen, 1994, pp. 71-72). But Dimen is not in search of an alternative to anality but for a broader perspective that would bring in and involve approaches such as critical theory, anthropology, and a Marxist analysis of class and alienation. Hers is an interesting perspective within the framework of what she describes as "the spirit of the Marx-Freud tradition ... but adding a postmodern perspective " (Dimen, 1994, p. 71).

Christopoulos (2014) takes up the dilemma of what happens when the patient suddenly says that he can no longer afford to pay either the same fee or any fee at all as a result of the impact on his personal financial situation caused by general economic circumstances, a dilemma that Dimen (1994) had asked analysts to address, unrepres, and to admit to as a source of anxiety.

Christopoulos's area of examination is "the current global socio-economic crisis" (Christopoulos, 2014, p. 1134), the continuing economic downturns and austerity-ridden circumstances existing in several countries as a result of the financial crashes of 2008. The problem of the payment of the fee rears its head unequivocally in such circumstances and Christopoulos explores this through several patients in her Greek practice. "The moment when the patient says that he cannot, or when it becomes otherwise evident that he cannot pay the agreed fee as a result of financial loss due to the crisis, catalyses a crisis in the analysis" (Christopoulos, 2014, p. 1136). There is agreement with Dimen's point that bringing the issue of 'money' into the setting of the consulting room, that is, a bringing in of external realities, can lead, in fact, to a deeper understanding of the complex, internal, interpersonal dynamics taking place within the analytic dyad. Christopoulos's argument is that any economic crisis is very likely to have an impact on the analyst as well as the patient, leading to the analyst's own conflictual internal and external realities. She states that:

Because there may be pressure from the patient to make a decision immediately as he feels he does not have funds, the analyst's maintenance of the analytic stance – creating an analytic space by giving time to investigate and work through the issue – may essentially mean that the analyst will not get paid for that time, and by several patients, constituting a significant loss of income. The analyst's self-preservation is thus immediately in conflict with his analytic stance and function, to care for his patient in the best possible way.

(Christopoulos, 2014, p. 1137)

But how should the analyst react? Should there be a practical, open, discussion about a bill not being paid, or should the patient's personal financial difficulties be worked through in sessions through a process of analytical enquiry? Christopoulos's position is that the latter would seem preferable and amenable to both parties. But the question arises that there might be the lingering suspicion that whatever the outcome of the working through, the analyst would like to be paid or otherwise sessions have to be discontinued. No income would be coming in and the Freudian advice rings loudly that analysts should not "sacrifice" themselves by not having any 'money'. This critical theme is addressed by Christopoulos directly as she reveals her own "internal reaction to this, which in the main was an intense anger at the state of affairs in the world, followed by an intensification of investment in my work" (Christopoulos, 2014, p. 1149). Thus it is clear that one hundred years ago Freud was writing about issues about the fee that today still dominate the patient-psychoanalyst discourse on 'money' in the clinical encounter, with satisfactory solutions and outcomes still apparently out of reach in many instances from the point of view of both analyst and patient. Of course, questions pertaining to transference and countertransference are also valuable to consider, linked as they are to the as yet barely theorised area of power-relations with respect to money within the classical texts.

In Freud's opinion underlying all this was his patients' "false shame" derived from their middle class status (Freud, 1913, p. 131): their own inhibiting factors

imposed by class and social conditioning that prevented the free discussion of 'money' *as money* during the consulting room encounter. The middle classes were those from central Europe's bourgeois citizens who could afford to be treated by analysis, and Freud points out that:

As far as the middle classes are concerned, the expense involved in psychoanalysis is excessive only in appearance. Quite apart from the fact that no comparison is possible between restored health and efficiency on the one hand and a moderate financial outlay on the other, when we add up the unceasing costs of nursing homes and medical treatment and contrast them with the increase of efficiency and earning capacity which results from a successfully completed analysis, we are entitled to say that the patients have made a good bargain. Nothing in life is so expensive as illness – and stupidity.

(Freud, 1913, p. 133)

## **1. Is 'Money' Nodal?**

It is important to ask just how important was 'money' to the first generation of psychoanalytic theorists and whether it was a major concern in their daily lives. Although middle class and bourgeois like the majority of their patients, the pioneering psychoanalysts revealed no equivalent shame or inhibitions about discussing 'money' as a material concern in their private correspondences. In their letters they are clear that it is important to earn enough 'money' to satisfy the necessity of maintaining the standard of living that they desired as members of a particular social class. But this psychoanalytic generation also had a social conscious and established low fee-paying or free 'polyclinics' in Vienna, Budapest, and Berlin (Fisher, 2007; Danto, 2005; Diercks, 2002). Also revealed in the letters of the theorists are the impacts of loss or gain of 'money' upon their psyches, health, and sense of well-being. This is particularly notable in the early years of their correspondences and this significance can probably be attributed to the contextual background of their having to establish their psychoanalytic *professional* practices, revealing how they had to juggle with the resulting personal financial outcomes and anxieties. These personal factors are distinctive in being in sharp contrast to their neglect of a theoretical discussion of the same areas in their published work. In the following extract, for example, having spent Christmas with the Freud family in

Vienna, Ferenczi writes to Freud from Budapest at the beginning of January 1909 to say that:

After the beautiful days in Vienna it was difficult to resume work. To be sure, I am presently at an extremely low ebb; the month of December was fateful. I lost – all too soon – three patients. At the moment I have only two, and they are at “reduced rates”. But I am not depressed. I know it will come.

(Freud & Ferenczi, 1993, p. 32)

A clear linkage emerges from this statement between poor finances and poor spirits: that is, an impact on psychic well-being. But does Ferenczi want to make this linkage or admit that he, whether consciously or unconsciously has succumbed to or even been gripped by it? This is unclear. He does not want to admit to being “depressed” due to the impact of the loss of patients’ fees, but it is striking that he uses the term “depressed” given the psychoanalytic implications, for example, low libido. Further, to state that “I am not depressed” is tantamount to accepting that a certain situation *can* depress you. But what Ferenczi does allow is the sight of the connection, arguably only *semi*-consciously expressed by him, between his low spirits – he is “at an extremely low ebb” – and the low state of his *financial* health due to his having “only two” patients and at “reduced rates”. There is a sense that the reduction in rates is now in retrospect a cause of regret. There is also the indication that he would have liked the three patients that he lost to have continued with him not only for therapeutic and clinical reasons, but also for the benefit of his financial situation: he lost them “all too soon”, he writes.

Following this unburdening about his ‘money’ problems, Ferenczi announces in the next sentence that he has been asked to give a lecture on the neuroses by a doctors’ organization: “The Association is very respectable; it pays 120 crowns for such a lecture” (Freud and Ferenczi, 1993, p. 32). Is Ferenczi’s characterization of “very respectable” referring not only to the status of the association but also, even if unconsciously, to its apparently more than modest

lecture fee payments? The answer has to be in the affirmative given that the lecture fee is specifically stated. Ferenczi, it seems, has acknowledged that the state of his finances is important enough to have an impact on his psychic well-being. However, this importance and these impacts were not given the in-depth explorations and investigations that they, arguably, warranted. Ferenczi's own reactions to tight financial circumstances cast doubt on the validity of his dismissal of his patients' 'money' problems as being only "material" problems unworthy of psychic probing, as revealed in his clinical encounters in *The Clinical Diary*, which will be examined later in this chapter.

In March 1909, upon receiving a book as a gift from Freud, Ferenczi writes to thank him but admits that: "through your gift you have robbed me of the satisfaction of "spending money for something valuable". That might sound somewhat neurotic to you; and it really is a "symptom feeling" (Freud and Ferenczi, 1993, p. 48). When Ferenczi says in this letter that he has been "robbed" of "satisfaction", it would seem to convey the probability that Ferenczi must have held a deeper psychical understanding than that expressed in his major theoretical work on money (Ferenczi, 1914) on the role that 'money' played, or could play, within the psyche: the *satisfaction* that it could bring when one had enough of it to spend on something valued. The expression that Ferenczi uses is not about the gift he received; it is about *the spending* of 'money' to buy that gift. But where there is satisfaction there is also the possibility of its opposite, *dissatisfaction*, and hence the aptness of Ferenczi noting the potential neurotic undertones of his reaction. This is an acknowledgement of psychic impact and an acknowledgement of the potential of 'money' to cause such impacts and feelings, in other words: symptoms. By May 1909, Ferenczi is able to write to Freud that:

There is now a noticeable increase in my practice; and although the slump which I have endured for some months was not enough to depress me seriously, I do feel a certain satisfaction now that I see that better times seem to be breaking out.

(Freud & Ferenczi, 1993, p. 60)

Indeed, he reinforced this point again a few weeks later by informing Freud that: “The material side of this practice is gradually improving, especially since I no longer accept any new non-paying patients” (Freud and Ferenczi, 1993, p. 68). However it is back to the drawing board in April 1910 as far as Freud is concerned when Ferenczi’s loss of a patient to another psychoanalyst causes Freud to remonstrate:

I will take this opportunity to point out to you how wrong it is for you to charge ten crowns per session when Sadger demands twenty. You see, the ten didn’t keep him with you and the twenty didn’t keep him from going to Sadger. Promise me you will improve!

(Freud & Ferenczi, 1993, p. 161)

But Freud is contemptuous, as is Ernest Jones, about what they regarded as the sheer lack of any inhibitions that North Americans had about making ‘money’. Jones writes to Freud that the medical professionals interested in psychotherapy “are so concerned in money making as to do practically no original work or observations” (Freud and Jones, 1995, p. 13). He continues even more dismissively in the same letter: “The general quality of the neurologists and psychiatrists in America is much poorer than I expected. They are chiefly what is here called ‘business’ people, being concerned mainly with making money” (Freud and Jones, 1995, p. 15). But Jones does not have a holier than thou attitude to the material aspects of life that his middle class status demanded. In a letter to Freud in May 1916, that is, in the middle of the war years, he tells him that despite being busy with eleven analyses a day, he is developing his “hedonic side” for exercise purposes and that:

I have bought an auto-cycle with side-car and take off Saturday afternoons for the summer, which gives me a night in the country. I am just buying a country cottage, built in 1627, about 90 km. from

London, and hope to see you there some day, as well as other of our friends.

(Freud & Jones, 1995, p. 318)

Martin Stanton (1990, p. 25) notes that when Freud relates the news about Jones's purchases and the number of patients he has, plus a waiting list, Ferenczi's reaction is: "Oh happy England!" But Jones was not alone. How far could 'money' stretch and what was it able to purchase during this part of the last century with regard to professional and academic disciplines? The case of John Maynard Keynes provides an interesting example from one end of the spectrum. The Cambridge university Keynes scholar, Peter Clarke, brought out an elegant biography during the global financial crises of 2008 -2010 in which the important factor in Keynes's life of making 'money' came through clearly, as: "Keynes saw nothing wrong in making money" (Clarke, 2009, p. 51). A calculation is made, through conversion, of the approximate wealth that Keynes attained through his financial investments, currency speculations, and publishing:

What made Keynes's literary career distinctive was that he did not depend upon it as his sole, or even main, source of income. He became an active investor, managing his portfolio personally. From 1923 onward, this was how the bulk of his income was generated (except in 1932-3, when *Essays in Persuasion* kicked in). His total income was at a level around £4,000 to £7,000 a year for most of the 1920s and the early 1930s, with a dizzying peak of nearly £19,000 in 1937-8 – say three-quarters of a million pounds or certainly over a million dollars today. What underlay his income was the fluctuating performance of his investments.

(Clarke, 2009, pp. 49-50)

Putting Keynes to one side, Clarke also provides a good illustration of what more ordinary middle class academic incomes of this period – the 1920s and 1930s – provided, making the case well that 'money' went much farther in those days in



its purchasing power and in its provision of what was considered to be a good standard of living. Although Clarke describes the income and living standards of an English academic, the attainment and maintenance of similar middle class lifestyles were prominent concerns and aspirations among the continental European intellectual classes to which the pioneering generation of psychoanalysts belonged. What is apparent is that an income as high as Keynes's was not necessary in order to live well:

Keynes's income of £5,000 in 1920 could be expressed as the equivalent of some £150,000 or about \$250,000 in today's money. But this fails to capture the real value of what such an income was worth at the time. ... a successful college teaching Fellow who became a professor in due course, [who] in the early 1920s had an income a bit over £1,000 a year (and by the 1940s about £1,500). This was a basis on which to live well, supporting a wife and family in a select, convenient part of west Cambridge; with a comfortable house, purchased for £3,000 in the 1930s and worth far more than £1 million today.

(Clarke, 2009, p. 45)

Therefore a well-provided for life could be obtained with £1,500 a year (and its European currency equivalents).

## **2. Theoretical Epistles on 'Money'**

Although Ferenczi does notify Freud in March 1912 that he has finished his paper on 'money' – "Next week I will send you the work on money and coprophilia, with a brief postscript on symbolism for Imago" (Freud and Ferenczi, 1993, p.354) – Ferenczi had given no indication in previous letters to Freud that he was collecting material for or writing what was to become the ontogenesis of interest in 'money' paper. In contrast to other topics, Ferenczi had not entered into any theoretical discussions about 'money' or 'wealth' in previous correspondences in preparation for any such forthcoming paper. Jones, on the other hand, in a letter to Freud in November 1910 includes a review of a

paper on anal erotism and the 'Geld-complex' (Money-complex) in this manner, (the emphases are his):

I liked Sadger's paper on *Analerotik*, and agree with him except perhaps for one point. He differs from you in believing that miserliness is not cardinal, and may be absent in women of the well-to-do class. I find that in such women (several cases) the Geld-complex is always important, that is, that the question of money is always very significant, though it may not appear on the surface as miserliness. I have in mind one patient who was apparently excessively extravagant and *generous*, who hated miserliness. It turned out that her generosity was a reaction against her mother whom she intensely hated, who was very miserly (and who used to give her clysters till she was twelve years old), i.e. *Analerotik* and homosexual sadism and masochism. Geld complex was none the less strong, e.g. she hated being *made* to pay a cent unless she wanted to in her own way, etc.

(Freud & Jones, 1995, p. 74)

Jones clearly had thought deeply about the theoretical aspects of 'money', but he did not publish any papers focusing on the subject of the 'money complex', despite his statement that "the question of money is always very significant". A few months before Jones's points in his letter to Freud, there is a rare occurrence from Ferenczi of a theoretical commentary on 'money' – and an important one. In a June 1910 letter he highlights repressed miserliness and refers to 'money' as a 'nodal' point, (the emphases are his):

In the last few months I have been occupied with a series of hypochondriacal anxiety hysterias, more often than not complicated by obsessional thinking. With great regularity I found in them the exceptional significance of a repressed miser complex. These are people who, in reaction to the miserly father, are *consciously* cavaliers, but unconsciously they are forced to sympathize with the father's miserliness. Every expenditure of money (especially family expenses) makes them ill; in place of "impoverishment" the hypochondriacal idea of "going to ruin" through illness and death steps in. *Money* is the valuable thing that belongs to the father, onto

which the struggle for the mother is displaced – at the same time it is a substitute for renounced coprophilia. Money is a terribly important nodal point – it also takes upon itself the worries about masturbation, about “loss of semen” – (the husband, for instance, has carefree intercourse with his wife and becomes afraid of death from small expenditures of money).

(Freud & Ferenczi, 1993, pp. 178-179)

These expositions from Jones on anal erotic conflict and Ferenczi on the nodality of ‘money’ are beautiful illustrations of strong and early engagement on the subject of ‘money’. But it is Ferenczi who is radical enough to crown ‘money’ as “nodal”, that is, as central and essential.

To conclude this section it should be noted that what is clear throughout is that Freud took his own advice and was as strict on himself as he advised his fellow analysts to be. In a letter to Ferenczi in February 1910 Freud declaims that:

On the whole I am only a machine for making money and have been working up a sweat in the last few weeks. A rich young Russian, whom I took on because of compulsive tendencies, admitted the following transferences to me after the first session: Jewish swindler, he would like to use me from behind and shit on my head.

(Freud & Ferenczi, 1993, p. 138)

That rich young Russian was Sergei Konstantinovich Pankejeff or “the Wolf-Man” as his famed case history became known in psychoanalysis. .

In this chapter so far there has been consideration of the manner in which Freud regarded ‘money’ in the consulting room and how that has reverberated down to today; and there has been a discussion of what Freud and his fellow pioneering psychoanalysts wrote to each other about ‘money’ in private correspondence.

Let us turn now to a text written by Ferenczi, the man who published a *theoretical* paper on ‘money’, who grappled with the subject matter and its roots. We shall look at the ways in which his interest in the topic was pursued, albeit in

an implicit way, in subsequent writings, including his posthumously published clinical diary.

### 3. Reading the Clinical Diary of Sándor Ferenczi

Ferenczi has proven his credentials with regard to his theoretical interest on the subject of 'money' with his decision to write the paper delineating the theory of anality in its relation to 'money'. This theory in general and the paper in particular was subjected to a critical close reading in the previous chapter. However, no publication on the topic of 'money' were to follow on Ferenczi's part. A question thus arose: could a much later work, Ferenczi's remarkable *Clinical Diary* (Ferenczi, 1932), contain writings or notes on 'money' and assumptions about its theoretical bases that he had gathered down the years but had not 'written up' for publication? In order to answer that question the *Diary* itself would have to be examined in order to locate traces of further theoretical elaborations. But there were two further reasons. The second, closely aligned to the first was this: the *Diary*, which Ferenczi started in January 1932 and kept for nearly a year, was a document that was notable for the detailed baring of the souls of Ferenczi's *patients*, who came to see him with their neuroses and psychoses (Pelaez, 2009; Bokanowski, 2004; Rachman, 1993). The *Diary's* status in the psychoanalytic literature as a classic, even iconic text (Aron and Harris, 1993; Stanton, 1990; Hoffer, 1990; Grosskurth, 1988; Fortune, 1989) that explores the at times tortured mind (as presented by the man himself) of one of psychoanalysis's most original thinkers, continues to be reflected today in a number of theoretical, clinical, and hermeneutical reflections (Haynal, 2014; Borgogno, 2004; Rudnytsky, Bokay, and Giampieri-Deutsch, 1996). But had his clinical encounters revealed anything in the consulting room on the subject of 'money'? The rich detail provided by the regularity and routine nature of a diary's construction appeared to provide a potentially promising source for the emergence *in written form* of the kind of supposedly ordinary problem that 'money' is often regarded as being. A supposedly mundane problem that suddenly manifests as extraordinarily important enough to emerge into the open when combined with emotional problems. The third reason for attention to be paid to the *Diary* was that, if the *Diary* contained any narratives about 'money',

these accounts would be pertinent to the classical period of psychoanalysis, the pre-World War Two years during which it was being written, and they would thus illustrate whether or not a leading psychoanalytic theorist of the classical period, Ferenczi, was or was not being provided with material that *could* have fed into his thinking theoretically, and perhaps developed it in non-standard, that is, non-analytic driven ways.

Thus a textual analysis of *The Clinical Diary* was conducted. A method of very close textual reading seemed to be best suited to digging out nuggets of information and hidden nuances about Ferenczi's patients' possible financial problems. Further, the method was necessitated by the *Diary's* style of long dense paragraphs that were often tightly packed with technical details. Ferenczi's style of writing could veer from the straightforwardly descriptive to the highly technical; and from the virtually opaque, fractured, and erratic to a seductively poetic and novelistic fluidity. The extracts on 'money' will be presented in the chronological order of a diary's intent and have been left as unabbreviated and 'raw' as possible in order to provide a sense of how Ferenczi received them and wrote about them – what the patient's 'voice' was during the clinical encounter and how it was heard by the analyst.

One contextual note needs to be repeated before continuing: *The Clinical Diary* was written during the general period of the "Great Depression" caused by the 1929 financial crashes in north America and Europe, as noted in *Chapter One*, and the social and historical backdrop is of difficult economic climates in many European countries. But it is a vital point that Ferenczi does not mention such economic factors and there is no suggestion that any of his patients suffered financially *because* of the financial crashes and that this was the underlying cause of their 'money' issues.

#### **4. The Subject of Money Rears Its Head With "R.N."**

The first question that the *Diary* raises is whether Ferenczi mentioned 'money' theoretically in the unique accounts of his patients' traumas and in his therapeutic attempts to reconstruct their mental lives. The answer was that indeed he had done so. The follow-up questions pertained to the manner in

which ‘money’ entered the analytical setting during the classical period, for example via accounts of patients’ financial worries, and to kind of reception that the analyst gave to such ‘money’ anxieties. With regard to Ferenczi’s most famous patient in the *Diary*, “R.N”, Martin Stanton writes that “her refusal or inability to pay fees is seen by him as a determined castration attempt” (Stanton, 1990, p. 158). An overall view of “R.N.”’s situation provides insight into Ferenczi’s general perspectives on ‘money’ and patients’ financial difficulties.

In January of 1932, Ferenczi discloses his initial reluctance to accede to a female patient’s demand for ‘mutual analysis’ sessions in which she would be able to analyze the analyst. It is now known that the female patient, “R.N.”, was an American called Elizabeth Severn (Fortune, 1993). Through her demands in their encounters, Ferenczi reveals inadvertently the power of ‘money’ in the *clinical* patient-analyst relationship: the continuation or not of analytical sessions depends on the ability to pay for them. Therefore, ultimately, the treatment and potential cure of the patient depends on whether the patient has any ‘money’. This, as noted earlier in this chapter, is still a fundamental dilemma today (Christopoulos, 2014; Berger and Newman, 2011). Ferenczi, taking account of the progress of the mutual analysis sessions and raising questions to himself about how they should be conducted, records this note about the financial circumstances of “R.N.”:

Example: financial situation desperate; all payments had stopped earlier, then the debt itself is cancelled. On a previous occasion a somewhat rash remark: in case of need, financial help is offered. (Shortly afterward inner opposition to this, combined with the feeling: one must surely not allow oneself to be eaten up by one’s patients.) Possible negative consequences: the patient, relying on this promise, neglected to make use of even such energies or real opportunities as were at her disposal: simultaneously, instead of allowing herself to be helped analytically, she tries to obtain material assistance (money, libido).

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 12)

Ferenczi appears to *unconsciously* theorize his patient’s demand – the “inner opposition” to lending her ‘money’ – as arising out of a fear of being “*eaten up*” by

a patient. This is most interesting because of its pointing to an unconscious *orality*. However, this important observation is not developed. Further, in the above citation and continuing throughout, ‘money’ seems to be considered by Ferenczi to be a “material” matter whose impact on the psychic positioning or psychic well-being of the patient is neither here or there. ‘Money’ becomes not a concern for psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic theory, but a concern for the financial transaction necessary for the continuation of psychoanalytic sessions. This is an important distinction. Indeed, the disapproval in Ferenczi’s tone should be noted, as he comments on what he regards as his patient’s missed financial opportunities. This highlights that ‘money’ is here being related to *work* and the ability to work for pay in order to assure the continuation of sessions. ‘Money’ has become nothing more than a pragmatic necessity. Fortune (1993) relates that:

In June 1930, Severn’s condition deteriorated: she lapsed into periodic comas and could not look after herself. Alarmed, Ferenczi admitted her to a sanatorium near Budapest. Concerned by Severn’s grave state and anxious that she might not pull through, Ferenczi cabled Margaret Severn to come from New York to be with her mother. He offered to waive his own analytical fee if it would enable her to remain in Budapest. Margaret responded immediately and stayed four months.

(Fortune, 1993, p. 108)

The emergence of the subject of ‘money’ in the clinical encounter appears to highlight positive or negative transference feelings and the fluidity between these two states on the part of both patient and analyst. In the above citation Ferenczi is offering to waive his fee, yet previously he had felt that he was being eaten up by “R.N”. One of Ferenczi’s achievements in *The Clinical Diary* was the decision to bring *the analyst’s negative transference* into forensic focus: the boredom, the resentments, the hostilities, even hatred, the financial manipulation. Ferenczi’s general breakthrough realization was this: what was necessary was the analysis of the analyst’s own continuing or newly arrived complexes. Why? Because they were certain to enter the clinical encounter. Ferenczi brought a focus to this problematic. In his 1909 paper on introjection

and transference he had expounded on the analyst-patient encounter in a manner that also brought in their financial contract:

The circumstances that other persons also are being treated psychotherapeutically allows the patients to indulge without any, or with very little, self-reproach the affects of jealousy, envy, hate, and violence that are hidden in their unconscious. Naturally the patient has then in the analysis to detach these “inadequate”, feeling-impulses also from the current inciting cause, and associate them with much more significant personalities and situations. The same holds good for the more or less conscious thought-processes and feeling-impulses that have their starting point in the financial contract between the patient and physician. In this way many “magnanimous”, “generous” people have to see and admit in the analysis that the feelings of avarice, of ruthless selfishness, and of ignoble covetousness are not quite so foreign to them as they had previously liked to believe. (Freud is accustomed to say, “People treat money questions with the same mendacity as they do sexual ones. In the analysis both have to be discussed with the same frankness.”)

(Ferenczi, 1909, pp. 44-45)

The ambivalence of the analyst towards his own patients was an ambivalence that went further and was rooted in more than the countertransference (Myers, 1996; Cabré, 1998). Ferenczi’s realization of the active force of the psychoanalyst’s unconscious *negative* agency foreshadows Winnicott’s (1949) embarkation, taking the reins from Ferenczi (Borossa, 2007), on an exploration of this combustible subject. Unconscious motivations have to be taken into consideration. What could be taking place unconsciously on the part of both the analyst and the patient? These countertransferential ambivalences come through on the subject of ‘money’ in *The Clinical Diary*.

## **5. The ‘Money’ Problems of Ferenczi’s Patients**

In this section, the patients’ narratives about ‘money’ will be set out chronologically in keeping with *The Clinical Diary*’s dating of entries. However, when necessary, comments will take a general perspective and not confine themselves to the single case being presented.

**19 January 1932**



In the writing of a case of mutual analysis with another female patient, “Dm.”, Ferenczi, without any obvious sense of deliberation or theoretical intent, bestows a psychoanalytic description of ‘trauma’ upon a crisis concerning ‘money’ by virtue of calling a *second* crisis that this patient has a “second trauma”:

A slow thawing, later on definite progress toward trust, particularly when in a moment of great distress (money matters) she found protection and help from me, and probably also some emotional response. Then came an attempt at displacement onto a third person (R.T.), but finally, after a second trauma (brother's death), also mitigated by me, she resigned herself to returning to her family and her duties.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 15)

The description of the patient as being in “great distress” should be noted. Thus ‘trauma’ and ‘distress’ are diagnosed, but the link to ‘money’ remains unclear.

### **16 February 1932**

In a discussion on the difficulties of mutual analysis when conducted with more than one patient, Ferenczi reveals some of his machinations with a female patient, machinations exercised in order to help him retain some overall control of the analysis:

A specific limit to this kind of mutuality will be created by the analytical situation if, for instance, I let the patient experience something by design, that is, without telling her in advance. It is questionable, for example, whether one can tell the patient, without prejudicing success, that I intentionally torment her and allow her to suffer, do not come to her assistance with kindness or money, in order to persuade her, first, to tear herself loose from the transference, second, to relinquish the idea that sooner or later suffering will bring her compassion or help, and third, that distress brings to the surface latent sources of energy.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 35)

Ferenczi here is effectively employing as a powerful tool the withholding of 'money', acknowledging that 'money' brings "assistance" and that its absence causes "suffering" and, again, "distress".

By March 1932 Ferenczi is conflicted about the positives and negatives surrounding "mutuality", particularly mutual analysis conducted in depth with a female patient singled out "on the grounds of the uniqueness of her case and of our joint technique, which penetrates into deep metaphysical regions" (Ferenczi, 1932, pp. 46-47). But what if the patient wanted to be paid: "the patient could start to demand financial assistance as recompense for *my* analysis by her" (Ferenczi, 1932, p. 46). This, he concluded, would bring an unwanted element into the analytical proceedings: "Providing financial help would, however, involve the analysis too much with reality and make separation more difficult" (p. 46). It is fascinating that Ferenczi connects 'money' with reality, seemingly in other words with consciousness and conscious life. Earlier on the same page he talks about having to have "regard for my own finances, that is, reality" (p. 46). For Ferenczi, 'money' is part of the outside, materially real world, thus outside psychoanalysis. But it is apparently this real, material world that has driven many of his patients *into* seeking psychoanalytic treatment. One must assume that Ferenczi is regarding 'money' as a hard, outside-world *material transaction* that psychoanalysis should not be concerned with. The female patient whose mutual analysis had caused Ferenczi these particular intellectual difficulties responds to his effort to curtail mutuality with wanting to end their sessions completely "in order for her to make practical use of the money still available to her, before she finds herself '*vis-à-vis du rien*'" (p. 47).

### ***Mid-March 1932: Patient "S.I."***

"S.I." was a female patient of Ferenczi's who suffered from what he called "delusional" ideations and concepts. She described how "a great many of her symptoms had somehow been forced upon her from the outside" (p. 57), that her psyche had been implanted by two women, her mother being the chief one of them, and that "this implantation of something alien to her own ego" (p. 58) had left her with an ego containing "fragments of evil" (p. 59) forcibly bestowed by

these persons. She feared that she was turning into the hard vicious person that her mother was. After pursuing what seems to have been the patient's own theory of returning these evil, alien, implanted fragments lodged in her ego back to those who had implanted them, and thus breaking the virtual connection between the patient's ego and the egos of her torturers, the patient's condition and her personal relationships are transformed. It is in detailing these transformations that Ferenczi notes that: "The most remarkable change is in her attitude toward money. She became generous, open handed, yet prudent" (p. 60). However, 'money' as a subject had not been mentioned at all in his writing of this patient's case history, when clearly it had been a subject that had been discussed between the two of them, and he had kept an eye on how the patient behaved with her 'money' to the extent that he found it noteworthy to record the changes in that behaviour. Here there is another, implicit and undeveloped potential link to 'money' to the questions around trauma and distress that were key preoccupations of Ferenczi.

### **17 March 1932**

In another session of mutual analysis Ferenczi relates that: "The patient greeted me with the news that someone had placed at her disposal a sum of money, enough for another year of analysis" (p. 60). These citations suggest that it is becoming evident that, at the very least, a significant number of patients *did* bring 'money' concerns into the consulting room – consciously and unconsciously. It transpires that one can argue that the *presence* of 'money' infuses the world of many patients in the consulting room, consciously and unconsciously.

### **19 May 1932**

Ferenczi's *Clinical Diary* can stimulate many reactions in the reader for a variety of reasons ranging from the breathtaking acknowledgement of technical psychoanalytic brilliance, to incredulity, to anger, infuriation, and laughter from enjoyment and pleasure. The entry below, whose title says it is concerned with "the sense of guilt", falls into the 'money' remit of this chapter, but it also reveals

Ferenczi's striking ability to deceive himself – for example his “for the fun of it” – whilst simultaneously extracting from his soul searing truths.

*On the constituent factors of the sense of guilt*

Two patients: one of them allows himself to analyze the other, a woman, for the fun of it. She soon discovers resistances in the analyst, and suggests mutual analysis, which unexpectedly leads to the discovery of the following situation: the woman “patient” was unable to put any trust in this man; it was not known why; he had clearly been extraordinarily good to her, yet in money matters he had been inconsistent. (1) Toward a man he was excessively generous, (2) toward the patient less so... His hatred of his mother in his childhood had almost led to matricide. At the dramatic moment in the reproduction of this scene he, so to speak, violently throws the knife away from himself and becomes “good”. The “woman analyst” discovers from this that in order to save his mother the “patient” has castrated himself. Even his relationship to men (father) is in fact compensation for a still more deeply repressed murderous rage. The entire libido of this man appears to have been transformed into hatred, the eradication of which, in actual fact, means self-annihilation. In his relationship to his friend the woman “analyst”, the origin of guilt feelings and self-destructiveness could be recognized *in statu nascendi*.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 110)

**3 June 1932**

A female analysand's use of ‘money’ is recognized by Ferenczi as a symptom of her seductive behaviour and a means of displacing anxiety. The italics in the excerpt are his:

Symptom: *Buying* oneself *peace* and *friendliness* by excessive expenditure of tenderness and presents of money. Fear that without these one will remain alone. Better to give away everything. *Behind this*: outbursts of rage if the *most exaggerated* expectation of pleasure without reciprocity is not fulfilled by every object, every person. First impulse: to destroy the unaccommodating *world!* Then becoming aware of *anxiety, obedience exaggerated*, solely in order to escape the anxiety.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 115)

## **12 June 1932**

In his *Diary* Ferenczi makes claims about what he regards as Freud's hypocrisy towards patients. He wants to tell the reader what Freud *really* thinks in private behind the backs of patients: that Freud actually uses his patients for financial gain. But below he appears to accord with the allegations he makes against Freud by stating "Is true":

### *Doctor hating patients*

"Freud: "rabble," "only any good for making money out of, and for studying." (Is true, but must be admitted to the patients.) They feel it in any case and produce resistance. (When it is admitted – trust increases.)

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 118)

It is to be wondered how much trust is actually "increased" when the above sentiments are admitted. And it will be seen in a later entry that similar charges are made against Ferenczi. But this is a good example of the kind of negative countertransference that Ferenczi was unafraid of, hence his "when it is admitted".

## **16 June 1932**

For the second time and with a different female patient – see the entry above of 19 January 1932 – the occurrence of a sibling's death, a traumatic event, is likened in emotionally disrupting scale to the situation the patient finds herself in because of great loss of 'money'. *Both* are "tragic", as Ferenczi records:

Patient S.I., following a brief, passionate transference phase, kept entirely secret, entered a phase of strong resistance, exacerbated by the unexpected interruption of the analysis on my part (trip to America). Gradual return of trust, helped by my sincere sympathy at two tragic moments: (1) when it became known that her husband had squandered enormous sums of money on gambling and women, (2) at the sudden death of her beloved brother. The transference, however, assumed entirely the form of the most sublimated, congenial, intellectual rapport.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 125)

The entry of June 16<sup>th</sup> is a long and densely interwoven mix comprising of case history narrative details, spiritualistic reflections – a decades-long passion of Ferenczi's (Mészáros, 1993) – and psychoanalytic theorizing. Two further observations about "S.I." and her financial situation are made:

In the meantime, or perhaps under the influence of these changes, substantial increase in the sense of reality, and the undertaking of extremely practical measures to rescue the family's financial and moral position. She becomes the adviser of all and sundry, takes charge of her daughter's upbringing; indeed, she helps a whole series of people in her social circle.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 126)

It is also quite striking that this person who is otherwise thrifty and even stingy in small matters pays the not inconsiderable expenses of the treatment with pleasure, so to speak, and indeed firmly refuses my offer to reduce the fees or to remain in debt; surely an indication that part of the "sublimation" has taken the path of anal eroticism.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 127)

I would like to conclude the examination of *The Clinical Diary* with the two following entries. One corroborates Christopher Fortune's citation earlier of the circumstances that necessitated the arrival of Severn's daughter in Budapest; and the second entry is focused on Ferenczi himself. First:

### **8 August 1932**

R.N.: About three years ago discovery of the amnesia, two years ago reproduction of the trauma, on each occasion ending with terrible pains and convulsive laughter. Since then an outburst every day, almost without exception. Adhering strictly to the theory that the quantity of abreactions will finally be exhausted and that this will lead in time to certain recovery, I continued to produce the attacks. Financial difficulties nearly led to a break in the analysis, but my stubborn faith made me carry on, even without being paid. Progress almost nil. Greater financial demands on me and increasing demands on my time and interest exhausted my patience, and we had almost

reached the point of breaking off the analysis, when help arrived from an unexpected source.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 193)

The second story, quoted at length, encapsulates the resentment, conscious and unconscious, that swirls around the financial relations between the analyst and the patient. Sexually graphic language – surprising to encounter and appearing quite regularly in the *Diary* – has been left out. It is notable that this in-depth entry, the only one that is completely devoted to a problem about ‘money’, examines a *male* patient. Did Ferenczi with his admitted mother complex – see entry of 19<sup>th</sup> May 1932 – regard ‘money’ as *male*, as a *masculine* matter?

### **11 August 1932**

#### *A note on criminality*

A former patient, analyzed for a time and relatively freed from his anxiety, consults me again: he is in some difficulty at the moment, but this does not upset him too much. In his business he has gotten “involved in undertakings far too large for the capital at his disposal... he got involved in love affairs with twelve or fourteen women, concurrently or one after the other. Ultimately, with three at once on a fairly steady basis: (1) his cook, who became devoted to him like a bitch, (2) one of the most attractive and intelligent young ladies of higher social standing, who is also scientifically talented (he broke off the relationship with her as this lady objected to the affair being made public, knowing that her reputation and career would be ruined in higher aristocratic circles if that happened), (3) an outstanding Hungarian physician, who quite the contrary made too public a show of the relationship and behaved as though she were his wife. He managed to get a considerable sum of money from her, and he has also failed to pay my fee for his analysis for many months.

Now that he sees that he cannot become rich quickly, he is thinking of escaping from his obligations. At the same time he announces that he has been infected with gonorrhea by a prostitute in Paris but has since had intercourse with both the cook and the doctor. I told him that he must get treatment for himself and have both women examined.

I used the opportunity to tell him that from now on he must pay me, but I did suggest that for the time being he could pay only half and continue to owe me the money for earlier treatment. Strangely enough, at the time of the first consultation I was still inclined to lend him the entire sum again, and it was only on further reflection that I told myself it was high time to show the man the limits of reality in analysis as well. (The slowness with which I realized this came out in my self-analysis: identification with the coward who overcoming his fear turns into a hero, beyond good and evil.) ...For the present he

refused to accept my conditions; I remained firm, however, and expect a settlement from him, probably tomorrow...

To some extent I admire the man who dares to do the things that I deny to myself. I even admire him for the impudence with which he cheats me.

An interesting idea occurred to me today in connection with this man: I thought that he would physically attack me, and had the idea of carrying in my pocket my revolver that fires warning shots. For the moment I have put off settling matters until tomorrow; but I am determined to remain firm, and if necessary to let him go. I have the feeling that if I give way he will treat me like a fool – as he does almost everyone else – and take advantage of me. If I remain firm, he may really attack me; he has already started to hint that he gave me enough money before (so that he is not willing to pay me any more); he can threaten me with publicity, disparage me to my friends, etc. All of it will leave me cold. Perhaps he will then try to make me give in by breaking down; in that case I will offer to continue his treatment, if he accepts my conditions.

(Ferenczi, 1932, pp. 194-196)

Unfortunately Ferenczi does not return in subsequent passages to the subject of the man who owed him a large amount of money and about whom he was so worried that he thought seriously of arming himself with a gun. But what is apparent here is a complex set of dynamics around potency and power in relation to having or not having 'money'.

## 6. Concluding Remarks

The argument that is being made is that the above case stories from Ferenczi's *The Clinical Diary* when taken together as a body of written evidence confirm that there was no absence of the subject of 'money' in the analytical setting during the classical period. Neither was there a lack of discussion about how the patients behaved with 'money', even if the unconscious implications theoretically were not always drawn out. The centrally critical question of whether the subject of 'money' arrived in the setting of the psychoanalytic clinical encounter could be answered with a "yes". A further question had been: if the patient and the analyst *do* discuss 'money' during the analytical hour, what are they talking about and how are they talking about it? The *Diary* reveals *textual* evidence from a key figure of the classical period that 'money' and its



problematics penetrate the enclosed space of the consulting room, both consciously and unconsciously. Furthermore, as a result, these financial problems have to be dealt in cognisance of the transference and the countertransference at play. 'Money', it seems, is often wielded by patients as a *tool* of their negative transferential feelings.

Neurotics and psychotics, even if they are still halfway capable of fulfilling their functions as body and also partly as mind, should actually be considered to be unconsciously in a chronic death-agony. Analysis therefore has two tasks: (1) to expose this death-agony fully; (2) to let the patient feel that life is nevertheless worth living if there exist people like the helpful doctor, who is even prepared to sacrifice a part of himself. (Hence the tendency of patients to get into financial difficulties and to put our selflessness to the test.)

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 131)

The "tendency" of patients to have 'money' problems that they place in front of the analyst in the consulting room, states Ferenczi. A tendency is a *psychic aim*. Ferenczi awards patients the psychoanalytic prowess of recognizing and utilizing 'money' as a method of forcing the analyst to confront his countertransferential feelings, conscious and unconscious, towards the patient. 'Money' becomes the key that patients hope will unlock the analyst's real emotions. Will the analyst yield in empathy and love and help them financially? Will he open up to them if they succeed in getting hold of his attention by threatening him with loss of *his* income? Will they find out in this manner what lurks in the depths of the analyst's own psyche? A "woman patient", (most likely Elizabeth Severn's "R.N." but who receives no designation from Ferenczi), is recorded as castigating him with a list of "reproaches" against the practices of psychoanalysts in an entry entitled, "A catalogue of the sins of psychoanalysis". Interestingly, the patient's reproaches accord with some of Ferenczi's own views directed as attacks against Freud, as expressed within the *Diary*.

(2) As most patients are psychic shipwrecks, who will clutch at any straw, they become blind and deaf to the facts that would indicate to

them how little *personal* interest analysts have in their patients.... (4)  
The analysis provides a good opportunity to carry out unconscious, purely self-seeking, ruthless, immoral, indeed so to speak criminal actions and similar behaviour guiltlessly (without a sense of guilt), such as a sense of power over a succession of helplessly devoted patients, who admire him without reservation. Sadistic pleasure in their suffering and their helplessness. Unconcern regarding the length of the analysis, indeed the tendency to prolong it for purely financial reasons: if one wants to, one turns the patients into taxpayers for life.

(Ferenczi, 1932, p. 199)

Why do people suffering from problems of their psyche also seem frequently to get into financial difficulties? Whilst Ferenczi views the frequency of these 'money' problems among patients as a testing of the sympathies of the analyst, it could, instead, be regarded in this light: patients who have mental health problems also routinely get into financial difficulties at some point during their illness. There appears to be a strong possibility of a connection between psychic ill health and later financial instability. And, of course, financial instability leads to psychic ill health.

It seems that people who are in a "chronic death-agony" because of the impacts and implications of their trauma tend not to be in the best position psychically to handle their own finances capably – and it is interesting that Ferenczi puts neurotics and psychotics together given their differential diagnostics. Such people seem to get into debt and remain in debt on a more frequent basis. Ferenczi's view is that patients in – or should that not be *with* – such difficulties are testing the willingness of the analyst to help them financially. They conduct these "tests" in order for the analyst to prove his commitment to them through the level and quality of "sacrifice" he makes towards the patient's recovery. But might they not be behaving in this manner because they regard the giving of financial help as help extended towards recovering their *mental* health? It could be a vicious circle: poor mental health leading to incapacities around the handling of 'money' that leads to "money problems" that further disturb mental health. *Getting into debt makes them more ill mentally*. The manifestation of 'money' difficulties and the resulting anxieties intensify the impact on the patients' psychic health, and they would have no alternative but to bring such impacts and affects into their analytic sessions – even if it were only in the

*material* form of having to reveal that they were having difficulty in paying for their psychoanalysis sessions.

Finally, suffering a mental breakdown *because* of an external cause such as an economic downturn and having to go into analysis as a result would demonstrate that lack of ‘money’ is linked to poor mental health. The stories of suicides committed during the “Great Depression” of the 1930s have almost become folklore. The relating to the analyst by the patient of ‘money’ problems during their clinical encounter is not a “testing” of the analyst; it is a *cri de coeur* to the analyst.

This brings to a conclusion the discussion of the main thematic strands arising from the review of the literature in *Chapter One*. Those main themes were theory formation based on anality, and patients’ revelations in the clinical encounter. Thus, in *Chapter Two* the classical delineation of the ‘anal theory of money’ was explored and the critique opened up the possibility of the existence of an alternative hypothesis on ‘money’ and the unconscious. And in this chapter, clinical accounts given by patients in the consulting room, specifically in Ferenczi’s *Clinical Diary*, have been examined together with insight derived from their correspondence as to how psychoanalysts themselves related to the topic of ‘money’ in private.

It is evident from the material engaged with so far in this thesis, that ‘money’ and “material” concerns *do* appear to play an *oral-related, life-preserving*, role in people’s lived experience. It therefore seems that there *is* strong enough ground upon which to proceed towards the outlining and discussion of a hypothesis for the role that ‘money’ and ‘wealth’ could have in the unconscious that is based on *orality*.

At the outset of the journey of investigation undertaken to discover what could be the root psychoanalytic causes of the pressing problem of financial corruption, it seemed that we had been like trying to enter a closed room that had two locks with only one key to hand. To investigate financial corruption psychoanalytically it had been necessary to look to the classical theoretical writings on ‘money’. That part of the journey was made via the past through

close textual readings of key classical texts. But what was found was that what should have been at least a dual carriageway was instead only offering a single lane – anality – to travel upon, that this road was not satisfying its own requirements, and that there were no turnoffs. It became clear that what was *also* needed was to build a second lane – *orality* – which would provide that more efficient dual carriageway towards the unconscious and the meaning of ‘money’. In the next chapter, *Chapter Four*, we will therefore be outlining a hypothesis taking into account an oral explanation of the significance of ‘money’ based on classical and contemporary psychoanalytic principles.

## Chapter Four

### ORALITY:

#### AN ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS FOR THE MEANING OF 'MONEY' IN THE UNCONSCIOUS

What does 'money' symbolize in the unconscious? The first three chapters of this thesis have explored how classical Freudian psychoanalytic theory forged a symbolization of 'money' that saw it rooted in anality. The preceding stage of infantile development, orality, is one based on the quality of the primary nourishment and satisfaction received by the infant from its mother at the breast. It is Karl Abraham's excellent theoretical thinking on orality that this chapter will mostly build on, showing Abraham's clarity and in his aim of wanting to bring orality out from under the shadow of the dominance of anality in classical psychoanalytic thought. He succeeded in doing so. Freud's definition of the oral phase occurs almost in passing in a densely written passage of his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905). He begins by defining 'pregenital' as the term to be used for "organizations of sexual life in which the genital zones have not yet taken over their predominant part", and then states that: "The first of these is the oral or, as it might be called, cannibalistic pregenital sexual organization. Here sexual activity has not yet been separated from the ingestion of food" (Freud, 1905, p. 198). Aspects of classical psychoanalytic thinking around orality will be reviewed in this chapter in order to formulate an oral hypothesis on the relation between 'money' and the unconscious.

Karl Abraham's 1924 paper, 'The Influence of Oral Erotism on Character-Formation', provides substantial theoretical support. It is interesting to note the reverberating, reversing echo in the shortened version of the title – 'Oral Erotism and Character' – with Freud's seminal text 'Character and Anal Erotism' (Freud, 1908), which, as has been discussed in the previous chapters, formed the theoretical core of the anal theory of 'money'. Abraham's aim, as Freud's, was not

to examine 'money'; but both texts are highly significant for the understanding of the impulses, ambivalences, and variations in the attitudes towards 'money', wealth, and the accumulation and retention of desirable objects. Abraham's work confirms how deficiencies, disappointments, and ambivalence during the oral development stage lead to "the presence of the abnormally over-developed envy which is so common" (Abraham, 1924a, p. 398). Envy, wrote Abraham in his earlier paper on the anal character, originated in "the earlier, oral phase of libido-development" (Abraham, 1921, p. 383). Envy and greed are key factors in the exploration of the potential psychoanalytic roots of financial corruption, as shall be discussed in *Chapter Five*. For Abraham there existed "a great many people who have to pay a certain permanent tribute to their oral zone without actually forming any severe neurotic symptoms" (Abraham, 1916, p. 270). For example, the "orally gratified" soul can be a person with characteristics of generosity who identifies with "the bounteous mother" (Abraham, 1924a, p. 403).

Abraham's 'Oral Erotism and Character' is also similar to Freud's 1908 paper in being a relatively short text that contains acute insights. Abraham is informative about the implications of the oral development stage for an adult's attitude towards earning a livelihood, towards 'money' and income, and towards becoming a "bread-winner". In this chapter additional support for the importance of orality for an understanding of the impact of 'money' on the unconscious will also be derived from Abraham's papers entitled, 'The First Pre-Genital Stage of the Libido' (1916) and 'A Short Study of the Development of the Libido, Viewed in the Light of Mental Disorders' (1924b). Abraham's work sheds light on how a theorist like Melanie Klein, one of his analysands in Berlin in the period leading up to Abraham's death in 1925 (Bentinck van Schoonheten, 2015; Sanfeliu, 2014) was able to progress and further develop formulations on orality and the infant's complex relations with the breast as a part object. One can assess Abraham's work on the following basis: that Freud brings the theory of orality into existence; whilst Abraham writes about and extends its applications. And, in contrast to Freud's emphasis on the primacy of the phallus, for Abraham it is the primacy of orality, as he states: "phenomena connected with the genital zone

cannot be as primary as those connected with the oral zone” (Abraham, 1924b, p. 451). But before proceeding to the necessary outline of the nature of what is meant by ‘orality’ and what this might mean for relations with and attitudes towards ‘money’, it would be useful to set out first *how* the process of attempting to produce an oral hypothesis as an alternative to anality might be approached.

## **1. On Formulating an Oral Hypothesis: Equating Anus and Mouth**

What ought to be the main building blocks in an attempt to construct an oral hypothesis on the meaning of ‘money’ in the unconscious? The approach that will be taken here will be to extrapolate from what was done theoretically on the relation of anality to ‘money’. In short, to follow through not a radical reconstruction, but rather, a reconceptualization, that is, for a shifting of the emphasis from one part of the body to another – from the back to the front, from the bottom to the top; and by highlighting the subsequent possible results and repercussions of such a shift. Therefore, in effect, the approach to be taken in this chapter will be to align with the nature of the thinking on the delineation for anality and ‘money’ formulated by the classical psychoanalysts, but to *replace* their structuring delineation with a structuring that rests upon orality. The disagreement centres on the usage of faeces as the symbolic object for the interest in and need for ‘money’, and not on the psychoanalytic principles and mechanisms involved in the delineation of anality. Abraham astutely notes the “particular significance” of how “the pleasure in sucking undertakes a kind of migration” in which the actions of the anal and urethral muscles become “the same as that of the lips in sucking, and is obviously modelled on it” (Abraham, 1924a, p. 396).

Some observations that are pertinent to the decision made for methodological connectivity – that is, that the construction of orality’s relation to ‘money’ can be built in a similar fashion to how anality was related to ‘money’ – can be noted at this junction. The first observation is this: In *Chapter Two* Ferenczi and the focus on the anal developmental stage were discussed, but Ferenczi had also written that for young children: “Of the sexually excitable parts of the body (erogenous zones), for instance, they are specially interested in the mouth, the anus, and the genitals” and that “within the sphere of the bodily organs themselves: Penis and

tooth, anus and mouth, become equated" (Ferenczi, 1913, p. 279). This analytic observation is important: *"anus and mouth, become equated"*.

Children are aware that the two orifices are connected. Harnik (1924, p. 392) reported in a paper presented to the eighth psychoanalytic congress that: "A little girl related how in early childhood after eating quantities of currants, she and her two sisters would hold a competition as to who could count the largest number of undigested currants in the stools." But such observations are not only child-related. One of Ferenczi's adult male patients told him that he especially enjoyed possessing clean "brightly shining copper coins" and that to ensure this "he swallowed the piece of money, and then searched his faeces until he found the piece of money, which during its passage through the alimentary canal had become beautifully shining" (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 329). Ferenczi sources this behaviour and the patient's pleasure to "satisfaction of the most primitive anal-erotism" (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 330), but equally it could be argued that it substantiates the notion of a potential duality in the action taking place, in that it could also be argued that the patient wanted to, and was trying to, physically *eat* 'money' in the form of copper coins. Thus, this behaviour could be analyzed as having demonstrable oral roots. Why did the patient want to try to digest 'money' as food? Perhaps he unconsciously wanted to highlight that one could not actually eat money, but that 'money' is in a relation with clean food. 'Money' is not food; 'money' is access to food where there is food that can be bought. Thus, a rich man can potentially go hungry and even starve to death if he cannot attain the food that his 'money' has the potential to buy. The patient swallows the copper coins and then searches for the 'money' that has passed through his alimentary, food, canal. Is he not searching for 'money' to enable the purchase of more food amidst the contents of food that has already been eaten and digested? His actions could also, perhaps, be described as wanting to lodge 'money' permanently in his canal, to line his canal with the means, the access, and the gateway to clean (healthy) food.

The second observation on the connectivity of methodological construction of the anal/oral hypotheses is concerned with the psychical mechanisms that are employed. In his paper on anal erotism Freud (1908, p. 171) refers to the scandal



that was caused by the publication in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud, 1905) of his proposition that there was a sexual nature, an erogeneity of the anus for the infant. But by 1918 Ernest Jones was writing about what he called “the facts of anal erotism” (Jones, 1918, p. 413), as established by Freud, which by then had become constituted into a doctrine of psychoanalytic theory and practice:

The salient features as elucidated by psychoanalysis are: The mucous membrane lining the anus and anal canal possesses the capacity of giving rise, on excitation, to sexual sensations, just as does that lining the entrance to the alimentary tract. The sensations vary in intensity with the strength of the stimulus, a fact frequently exploited by infants, who will at times obstinately postpone the act of defaecation so as to heighten the pleasurable sensation when it occurs, thus forming a habit which may lead to chronic constipation in later life. The pleasure experienced in this way is one which, as a rule, becomes repressed in very early life, so completely that perhaps most adults are no longer capable of obtaining any conscious sexual pleasure from stimulation in this region, though there are a great many with whom this capacity is still retained. The psychical energy accompanying the wishes and sensations relating to the region is almost altogether deflected into other directions, leading to [the] sublimations and reaction-formations

(Jones, 1918, p. 414)

Jones here has summarized the premise of Freud’s work on the anal erotogenic zone very well, and brought to the fore the vital factor of the psychical mechanisms that would become influential subsequently: repression, displacement, sublimation, and counter-formations. These are standard psychoanalytic theoretical mechanisms, and thus will be in evidence in any discussion of orality. Abraham (1921) whilst congratulating Jones on his wide-ranging study on anal erotism felt that there was a need to highlight the psychical impacts on the infant, the limiting of its impulses, and the injuries caused to narcissism. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, Abraham’s detailed work on orality will provide indispensable guidance for an oral hypothesis on ‘money’.

Thirdly, in Ferenczi's delineation of anality the critical notion of object-love and its introjection – that is, its being incorporated into the body – is made clear in this manner with regard to faeces:

Faeces are also, however, one of the first toys of the child. The purely auto-erotic satisfaction afforded to the child by the pressing and squeezing of the faecal masses and the play of the sphincter muscles soon becomes – in part, at least – transformed into a sort of object-love, in that the interest gets displaced from the neutral sensations of certain organs on to the material itself that caused these feelings. The faeces are thus “introjected”, and in this stage of development – which is essentially characterised by sharpening of the sense of smell and an increasingly adroit use of the hands, with at the same time an inability to walk upright (creeping on all fours) – they count as a valuable toy, from which the child is to be weaned only through deterrents and threats of punishment.

(Ferenczi, 1914, pp. 321-322)

Of course, there are a multitude of objects and part-objects that are subject to these processes of introjection and incorporation, but which apply to orality? This question will be elaborated upon later in this chapter. But it can be observed here that in their *identification of the symbolizing psychical processes*, the processes of forming unconscious meanings in which the focus of an attention in adulthood can be sourced to an unconscious infantile generating factor, the classical theorists had pinpointed precisely and correctly the *infantile mechanisms* at work.

## **2. Freud, Anality and the Promise of an Oral Discourse Pertaining to Attitudes Towards Money**

The fourth and final observation on the appropriateness of connecting how anality and ‘money’ were outlined to how orality and ‘money’ could also be outlined, is interesting to record mainly because it returns one to Freud, whose seminal work enabled and legitimized a pulling together of various strands for a discourse on anality. In hypothesizing the kind of psychical reactions that could be taking place as a result of anality, Freud (1908, p. 171) stated that

“orderliness, parsimony and obstinacy” were tendencies that demonstrated that a typically anal-erotic sublimation or reaction-formation had emerged among those who “refuse to empty their bowels” during childhood and “enjoyed holding back their stool”, and who remembered “doing all sorts of unseemly things with the faeces that had been passed” (Freud, 1908, p. 170). From listening to the stories told to him by his psychoanalytic patients and from the study of case history reports, Freud was able to “infer that such people are born with a sexual constitution in which the erotogenicity of the anal zone is exceptionally strong” (Freud, 1908, p. 170). Freud linked the disappearance of such expressions of childhood-type anal erotism among adults to the appearance of what he called “this triad of properties” (Freud, 1908, p. 170), that is, orderliness, parsimony and obstinacy. The assumption being put forward was that in adulthood this was how their anal erotism was being released. Considering how the resultant psychical mechanisms operated on adults with regard to ‘money’, Freud states that although much of his supporting evidence was based on language use, myths, symbolism, and folk-tales, (as has been explored in *Chapter Two* in relation to Ferenczi’s work), the initial relation was far simpler:

The connections between the complexes of interest in money and of defaecation, which seem so dissimilar, appear to be the most extensive of all. Every doctor who has practised psychoanalysis knows that the most refractory and long-standing cases of what is described as habitual constipation in neurotics can be cured by that form of treatment. This is less surprising if we remember that that function has shown itself similarly amenable to hypnotic suggestion. But in psychoanalysis one only achieves this result if one deals with the patients’ money complex and induces them to bring it into consciousness with all its connections. It might be supposed that the neurosis is here only following an indication of common usage in speech, which calls a person who keeps too careful a hold on his money ‘dirty’ or ‘filthy’.

(Freud, 1908, p. 173)

It is fascinating that in the above citation that Freud himself refers to a “‘dirty’ or ‘filthy’” person as actually being “a person who keeps too careful a hold on his

money". Analinity and 'money' in terms of *possession* and *retention* is an argument that deserves to be made and can be shown, as demonstrated in citations on analinity, to have strong psychical foundations. This area will be returned to in *Chapter Six*. The argument being made in this thesis with regard to 'money' is that, in their attempt to theorize where the *interest* in 'money' and the *need* for 'money' arose from, the classical theorists were looking at the wrong end of the body, so to speak: at what was coming out of the anus and not at what was going into the mouth first. Common language use (and myths, symbolisms etc.) would certainly have supported taking an oral approach. One example above all comes to the fore and that is the term "bread-winner" for the main income earner in a family. Common expressions for *needing* and *getting* 'money' repeatedly feature "bread" and "dough".

A further comment in relation to the opening up of a wider discourse that brings in orality is an affirmation of the belief that Freud had that psychical tendencies and aims with regard to 'money' emerge *post-childhood*. Again, it is necessary to set to one side that Freud is making this comment with respect to an anal psychical root, but the point is well-made nevertheless and is transferable to orality:

The original erotic interest in defaecation is, as we know, destined to be extinguished in later years. In those years the interest in money makes its appearance as a new interest which had been absent in childhood. This makes it easier for the earlier impulsion, which is in process of losing its aim, to be carried over to the newly emerging aim.

(Freud, 1908, p. 175)

Freud states categorically and correctly that the interest in money "had been absent in childhood" and postulates that the aim, the direction, of the (anal) eroticism is a reaction-formation following as a result of what would have been a repression of the original (anal) erotic tendency. This new (anal) compromise formation is later "carried over" to the "newly emerging aim" of interest in money.

The usefulness of attempting to map a reversal towards orality from the initial all encompassing anal perspective is that this opens up possibilities for further, wider enquiries into mankind's relation to 'money'. A discourse on orality can be undertaken that brings in attitudes to 'money' that could lead to financial corruption. *Chapter Five* will explore the terrain of the status of having 'food', of being hungry, and of being fed in the context of an emerging developing country. It is important that we should take into account the lesser-regarded factors that are still, however, forceful and essential, the: "significant but unconscious psychical contents" that are brought into play, "each for itself, indirect symbolic representatives in the unconsciousness of all men" (Ferenczi, 1912, pp. 265-266). The psychoanalytic symbolization for 'money' should be more *orally* rooted in its eroticism and object cathectization abilities. It is proposed in this thesis that a more appropriate symbolic interpretation for the interest in and the need for 'money' be anything connected with and to *food*: the means of its attainability, its eating, and its availability. Food is taken orally, by the mouth, but what is meant psychoanalytically by 'orality' and the 'oral development phase'?

### **3. Freud's Theory of Orality**

In Freudian psychoanalytic theory the developmental phases are organizations of sexuality, that is, organizations of the 'sexual instinct', also termed sexual 'drive', focused around a particular erotogenic zone: oral, anal, and genital. The brilliance of Freud's thinking lay in the powerful realization and assertion that what was in the adult was what was in the child. In other words, that what was in the present was what was in the past, and therefore the progress to adult sexuality was grounded in the development of childhood sexuality. Freud states:

We found from the study of neurotic disorders that beginnings of an organization of the sexual instinctual components can be detected in the sexual life of children from its very beginnings. During a first, very early phase, oral erotism occupies most of the picture. A second of these pregenital organizations is characterized by the predominance of sadism and anal erotism. It is not until a third phase has been reached that the genital zones proper contribute their share in

determining sexual life, and in children this last phase is developed only so far as to a primacy of the phallus.

(Freud, 1905, p. 233)

These phases of the development of sexuality – oral, anal, phallic/genital – possess their own sole aims, for example, oral impulses will be demanding satisfactions that are linked to oral erotogenicity, that is, nutrition, food, eating, the mouth, etc. But the instincts/drives are also formulated as being influenced by component parts, such as compulsions towards sadism and masochism. Thus, for example, sadistic impulses will be striving for cruel, aggressive, dominating satisfaction. When combined, as in the emergence of oral sadistic impulses, the main instinct/drive will be construed as taking the form of a cruel, attacking, humiliating, subjugating tendency towards its object, an object that will have strong oral connections. These separate “different, instinctual components” (Freud, 1905, p. 234) have to become synthesized. There has to be a unified, final organization, which is meant to take place following the interruption of development by a period of latency. Now, “a new sexual aim appears, and all the component instincts combine to attain it, while the erotogenic zones become subordinated to the primacy of the genital zone” (Freud, 1905, p. 207). But Freud warns: “Every step on this long path of development can become a point of fixation, every juncture in this involved combination can be an occasion for a dissociation of the sexual instinct” (Freud, 1905, p. 235).

How is the energy that is invested in the sexual instinct/drive characterized? It seems that Freud means it to be a *fundamental* source of energy with a quality all its own, a driving force: ‘libido’, quantities of mental, psychical energy. Freud states that: “We have defined the concept of libido as a quantitatively variable force which could serve as a measure of processes and transformations occurring in the field of sexual excitation” (Freud, 1905, p. 217). The “special chemistry” (Freud, 1905, p. 217) that occurs in the erotogenic zones and in other organs of the body give rise to the production of libidinal energy, a special kind of energy that is connected to and derived from the sexual processes taking place

in the psyche. Libido was regarded as proceeding from and withdrawing back into the ego, and thus Freud spoke of 'ego-libido' and observed that:

This ego-libido is, however, only conveniently accessible to analytic study when it has been put to the use of cathecting sexual objects, that is, when it has become object-libido. We can then perceive it concentrating upon objects, becoming fixed upon them or abandoning them, moving from one object to another and, from these situations, directing the subject's sexual activity, which leads to the satisfaction, that is, to the partial and temporary extinction, of the libido.

(Freud, 1905, p. 217)

Libidinal energy is thus constructed as *the* fuel for life and life's activities in relation to objects, because it is *the* fuel for the agencies that comprise the psychic, mental, apparatus.

With regard to the instinct/drive and its libidinal relation to objects during the oral development phase, Freud wrote that: "At a time at which the first beginnings of sexual satisfaction are still linked with the taking of nourishment, the sexual instinct has a sexual object outside the infant's own body in the shape of his mother's breast" (Freud, 1905, p. 222). He describes this as: "this first and most significant of all sexual relations" (Freud, 1905, p. 222). The ramifications of Freud's statement are critical for the underpinning of a potential hypothesis on orality and 'money', for it allows and supports the argument that '*money*', *which purchases foods, can therefore become a symbol for 'food'* and an unconscious symbolization of the *nutritious* contents of the mother's breast – that primary desire and that primary satisfaction. Freud's statement further allows and supports the argument that 'money' could be regarded as being *intrinsically locked-in to the unconscious* as the *only* symbolization for food *because* it represents the contents of the breast and thus primary desire and primary satisfaction. However, for critics of Freud's drive theory, it was essential to note that although "the infant may be satisfying its instinctual drives in relation to an object (e.g. pleasurably sucking at its mothers breast), it may have

no psychological knowledge or mental representation of the object from which its satisfaction is derived” (Sandler, Holder, Dare, and Dreher, 1997, p. 73). However, the fact that the infant is unaware or aware that the object from which he sucks is a ‘breast’ is not the point; what is relevant is the *primary* (and primal) nature of the infant’s need and desire for the nutrition being received from the object, whether that object is a breast or bottle or hand, and the ensuing quality of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that is experienced.

#### **4. Karl Abraham and the Oral Development Phase**

In the 1920s, two very brief footnotes by Freud (1905, pp. 198-199) acknowledge that Karl Abraham carried out further work on the theory of an oral development stage. But why did Abraham feel the need to do this? This question can be answered by way of his papers on orality: the detail in them shows that Abraham clearly felt that the concept of the oral stage had been underdeveloped by Freud and orality’s influence on adulthood was underappreciated. Prior to the elaboration that will take place below, it can be stated overall that Abraham deduced, firstly, that orality has *two levels*: a) the primary level of sucking – where the drive’s energy “the libido of the infant is attached to the act of sucking” – and its manifestations on adulthood; followed by b) the secondary level of biting – where “the child exchanges its sucking activity for a biting one” – and its manifestations in adulthood (Abraham, 1924b, p. 450). Secondly, he determined that oral erotism and oral sadism produced psychical libidinal energies in adulthood with sexual aims limited by fixation in relation to objects that represented the breast-mother-milk configuration of infancy (Abraham, 1924b, 1916). Those were the psychoanalytic processes at stake.

In ‘The First Preenital Stage of the Libido’ (1916) Abraham affirms Freud’s 1905 theory that it is with the important help of “pathological material” (Abraham, 1916, p. 251) that psychoanalysis has been able to assume the existence of an oral stage, its erotogenic zone, and its impacts, that is, the unconscious psychical transformations, developments, and progressions that are taking place in accordance with and alongside the organic, biological, physical developments of childhood. But, “the earliest, ‘oral’ stage of development of the



libido awaits further investigation” because of the problem “that we are concerned with developmental processes which are hardly accessible to direct observation in children. At this early period the child can give no information about the processes of its instinctual life” (Abraham, 1916, pp. 251-252). However it seems clear that *something* is taking place that could have *psychic* implications:

We need only call to mind the intensity with which the child even from its earliest days indulges in ‘pleasure-sucking’. The zest with which it pushes both hands into its mouth, the impetuous way in which it catches at its fingers with its lips, its complete abandonment to the rhythmical motion of sucking and the final gratificatory effect of the whole process – all this shows what power is exercised by those early instinctual impulses. This power is clearly perceptible from the fact that many people remain subservient to it even in adult life.

(Abraham, 1916, pp. 265-266)

The oral stage is concerned with the consumption and the incorporation of the object into the body, the unconscious desire to “devour and demolish his object” (Abraham, 1916, p. 276). One patient, of whom Abraham (1916, p. 256) wrote that “as an adult he still felt most intensely that form of gratification which bore the character of incorporation, it is clear that his libido had experienced a strong fixation”, was insightful enough to feel himself that “his longing to suck milk was his deepest and most primitive instinct” (Abraham, 1916, p. 255). The conflict between ambivalent feelings – love versus hate, hostility versus friendliness – together with the “destroy” or “control” sadistic tendencies that can be directed towards the object during the process of incorporation are elements that are highlighted by Abraham (1924b, p. 438, p. 428). The potentially destructive, sadistic oral relations in the life of the adult and its impacts on relations with objects both internal and external, that is, with the self and with society, became core to Klein’s developmental theories (e.g. see Segal, 1973). And such potentially orality-based ambivalent feelings and fears – and sadistic ‘destroy or control’ attitudes – also featured in the narrative accounts of Ferenczi and his

patients both in terms of their own relations and with regard to money and financial affairs, as discussed in *Chapter Three*. Fears such as fear of being eaten up, consumed, or devoured.

### **5. Abraham's 'Oral Erotism and Character' and 'Money'.**

Attempting to outline the possible character traits that could be sourced to orality in his paper 'The Influence of Oral Erotism on Character-Formation' (1924a), Abraham states firmly early on that anality has to be understood on the basis that "the origin of the anal character is very closely connected with the history of oral erotism" (Abraham, 1924a, p. 395). Freud's 1908 anal characteristics have to be referenced back even further to oral sources as it would seem that Abraham believed, correctly, that you cannot understand the one without the other. Thus orality is an earlier, primitive, phase with profound consequences on the unconscious that anality seems not to override. It is a phase that merits being investigated on its own terms, because, as Abraham justly writes: "the first and therefore perhaps the most important step the individual makes towards attaining a normal attitude in his final social and sexual relationships consists in dealing successfully with his oral erotism" (1924a, p. 397).

The argument being made in this thesis that a dual key is required to unlock the double doors to a deeper understanding of what 'money' might mean in the unconscious – and thus the possible unconscious motivations driving financial corruption – now receives strong support from Karl Abraham: underlying anality is orality. Sequentially and temporally orality precedes anality, but in addition and critically, they also overlap, as Abraham points out: "At about the time that the child is being weaned it is also being trained in habits of cleanliness" (1924a, p. 396). It is during this biting phase of orality that the baby demonstrates ambivalent and sadistic desires to not only incorporate the mother's breast/body but also to attempt to devour and destroy it. Whilst the mother's body is also incorporated via the breast milk during the toothless sucking period, she is not attacked in the same manner, her destruction is not sought after. According to Abraham variations in oral character-formation depend on whether

those character features are expressing “the earlier or the later oral stage; whether, in other words, it is the expression of an unconscious tendency to suck or to bite” (1924a, p. 402). An example of what Abraham means with regard to the biting stage is: “The covetous impulses which are derived from the second oral stage” (1924a, p. 403).

But it is not only a matter of covetousness, the further example of “over-developed envy”, which has already been alluded to at the beginning of this chapter. It is the compensatory activities that can result from the forgoing of and the repression of pleasures and satisfactions of infantile oral erotism that are most interesting. But such renunciations, reversals, sublimations, and displacements taking place in the unconscious are varied, with manifestations that are apparent psychoanalytically in adulthood. The question now becomes: *What can the variations in oral erotism illuminate as to the roots of the interest in and need for ‘money’?* With regard to parsimonious and avaricious adults – the character traits that Freud explored in 1908 – Abraham observes that these traits are “built up on the ruins of an oral erotism whose development has miscarried” (1924a, p. 398). One critical factor is the amount of anxiety that can be generated by these states of mind:

Neurotic parsimony, which may be developed to the point of avarice, is often met with in people who are inhibited from properly earning a livelihood; and the anal sources of character-formation provide no explanation of it. It is in fact connected with an inhibition of the craving for objects, and this indicates that the libido has undergone some special vicissitude. The pleasure in acquiring desired objects seems in this case to have been repressed in favour of pleasure in holding fast to existing possessions. People in whom we find this inhibition are always haunted by a fear lest they should lose the smallest part of their possessions. This anxiety prevents them from trying to earn money, and renders them in many ways helpless in practical life.

(Abraham, 1924a, p. 399)

Certain other people, Abraham charged, could be described as living a life in which their “entire character is under oral influence” (1924a, p. 399). These were people “in whom the sucking was undisturbed and highly pleasurable. They

have brought with them from this happy period a deeply-rooted conviction that everything will always be well with them" (1924a, p. 399). But such optimism did not always bode well for the purpose of earning an income for themselves by themselves. Here Abraham determines the shape oral influence takes in practice in these cases and brings out the financial implications:

Some people are dominated by the belief that there will always be some kind of person – a representative of the mother, of course – to care for them and to give them everything they need. This optimistic belief condemns them to inactivity. We again recognize in them individuals who have been over-indulged in the sucking period. Their whole attitude towards life shows that they expect the mother's breast to flow for them eternally, as it were. They make no kind of effort, and in some cases they even disdain to undertake a bread-winning occupation.

(Abraham, 1924a, pp. 399-400)

For Abraham the highly optimistic unconscious desire for an eternally flowing mother's breast milk – from "a representative of the mother" – acts against the conscious need to provide oneself with a "bread-winning occupation", and in fact could prevent that conscious need from being realized. However, the reverse attitude of pessimism can also be sourced to orality: to disappointments in oral gratification. The resulting apprehensiveness means that: "To him the necessary condition of life is that his means of sustenance should be guaranteed to him up to the day of his death. He renounces all ideals of personal success in favour of receiving an assured and regular income" (1924a, p. 400).

## **6. An Hypothesis on Orality and 'Money'**

It seems that it might now be possible on the basis of the discussion that has been carried out so far in this chapter to move towards forming an hypothesis on the meaning of 'money' in the unconscious that looks towards orality. The manifestations in adulthood from what takes place during the pregenital oral development phase have been discussed in the previous section in order to answer the initial important question of what orality can illuminate

about attitudes to 'money' and income. The examples of particular character traits that can be sourced to orality which Karl Abraham described in his clinical work, stand as very good theoretical and observational foundations upon which to proceed towards the formulation of an oral hypothesis on 'money'.

On the assumption, supported by the work of Freud and Abraham, that orality can be defined as being ultimately about the infant's primary relationship with pleasure under the aegis of a primary object, then the first requirement appears to be to identify the status of the substance that is being incorporated by the infant: what is the infant's desire for this substance and what is the infant's satisfaction from this substance? From all accounts within Freudian psychoanalytic theory on orality the answer is that the infant desires to be nourished by and satisfied by 'milk', indeed by "the warm flow of milk". Freud states that:

It was the child's first and most vital activity, his sucking at his mother's breast, or at substitutes for it, that must have familiarized him with this pleasure. The child's lips, in our view, behave like an erotogenic zone, and no doubt stimulation by the warm flow of milk is the cause of the pleasurable sensation. The satisfaction of the erotogenic zone is associated, in the first instance, with the satisfaction of the need for nourishment.

(Freud, 1905, pp. 181-182)

Pleasure given via the mouth, that is, to the oral erotogenic zone thus becomes associated with nourishment. But having satisfied "the need for nourishment" from the pleasure of imbibing warm milk, the infant's mind later progresses to a desire to want to *repeat* such pleasurable sensations even when milk itself is not providing them. Thus the infant's first ever search for pleasure, *its primary libidinal search for satisfaction*, is for a pleasure that he has *already* experienced as a result of the taking of *food*. Freud provides the apt illustration:

No one who has seen a baby sinking back satiated from the breast and falling asleep with flushed cheeks and a blissful smile can escape the reflection that this picture persists as a prototype of the expression of sexual satisfaction in later life. The need for repeating the sexual satisfaction now becomes detached from the need for taking nourishment

(Freud, 1905, p. 182)

This separation of the psychical, libidinal, demand for satisfaction from the physical, somatic, demand for it is a critical developmental turning point. The satiated, satisfied infant has retained *an unconscious memory* of this blissful, post-feeding state of affairs, which can drive its demand for a repeat:

The state of being in need of a repetition of the satisfaction reveals itself in two ways: by a peculiar feeling of tension, possessing, rather, the character of unpleasure, and by a sensation of itching or stimulation which is centrally conditioned and projected on to the peripheral erotogenic zone.

(Freud, 1905, p. 184)

A patient of Abraham's provides a study in how archaic is this unconscious desire, how located its memory is in the past, and how rooted it is in the orality of milk, mother's milk, and the reconstitution of the pleasure of sucking from the breast:

One day, filled with an intense dissatisfaction with life, feeling without energy and wanting nothing to eat, he went to bed. His mother brought him a cup of milk. As he put the cup to his mouth and his lips came in contact with the fluid, he had, as he expressed it, 'a mingled sensation of warmth, softness, and sweetness.' This sensation surprised him, and yet seemed to be something known to him in the distant past; and at the same time it had an inexplicably soothing effect on him.

(Abraham, 1916, pp. 272-273)

Abraham's explains the unconscious force that led his patient to find the solace he sought in such a manner:

When now his attempt to get rid of his fixation had failed ... and he began to suffer from a severe depression, he unconsciously turned again to his earliest source of pleasure. The milk brought him by his mother awakened the earliest traces of pleasurable memories, and he was able to alleviate his depression for the time being.

(Abraham, 1916, p. 273)

To reiterate what happens to the infant it can be stated that: the first demand is for the need of milk, nourishment, food; then follows the pleasure and satisfaction of receiving that food; then this is followed by the psychical urge to experience that pleasure and satisfaction again because it will *represent* the feelings of being and having been fed. Freud (1905, p. 184) writes that: "in the case of the labial zone: it is the simultaneous connection which links this part of the body with the taking in of food" that is now detached to stand on its own as the psychical representative. This critical developmental point is thus crucial for the progress towards the symbolic connection of 'money' to orality in the unconscious and for how 'money' might be represented in the unconscious. A *simultaneous, spontaneous connection followed by a spontaneous detaching that cannot be construed as having been taught*. This is the spontaneity of the forming of a symbolic equation that was argued earlier as missing from the theory of anality and 'money', because that theory rests upon how the infant is *taught* cleanliness during toilet *training*, whilst the forming of a truly symbolic equation (Jones, 1916) does not require tuition. It should be spontaneous, as Ferenczi (1914) himself pointed to and, as was argued in *Chapter Two*, he thus inadvertently also pointed to a deep fault line in his championing of anality's *unconscious* symbolization with 'money'. But here, with regard to the oral erotogenic zone, there *is* an act of *unconscious spontaneity* in the mechanism of the switching of the flow of the primary libidinal current *from* the demand of the

need for nourishment *to* the demand for the repetition of the representation – the blissful state – of the pleasure of having been fed. A spontaneous, unconscious, symbolizing process has taken place with regard to the connection between primary pleasure and satisfaction and *food*.

As a result of the arguments that have been made in this chapter, it would now seem appropriate and feasible to attempt an hypothesis on orality, the unconscious, and ‘money’.

Therefore, the hypothesis that can now be made in this thesis is that the prototype inner state of pleasure and satisfaction from being and having been fed as an infant is an archaic prototype that persists in the unconscious precisely because it is the prototype for primary satisfaction. Thus, it can be hypothesized that whatever represents and comes to symbolize the ability to provide food and nourishment will be equated unconsciously, symbolically, with the provision of basic, primary pleasure and satisfaction. And the hypothesis being made holds both for the pleasure and satisfaction received from food and any displeasure and dissatisfaction. Thus, it can be argued that what represents ‘money’, or the ability to purchase ‘food’, will come to stand in the unconscious for pleasure and satisfaction from food, or the anxiety and fear of hunger and possible starvation from the deprivation or non-availability of food.

## **7. Displeasure and Dissatisfaction**

It is in Abraham’s work that not only the satisfactions but also the dissatisfactions, anxieties, and fears of not having enough food are detailed. It is the important reminder that pleasure is not always encountered during the oral phase’s sucking stage. “Given certain conditions of nourishment the sucking period can be an extremely displeasurable one for the child. In some cases its earliest pleasurable craving is imperfectly gratified, and it is deprived of the enjoyment of the sucking stage” (Abraham, 1924a, p. 397). It is important to bring out these details in order to highlight the contention that the hypothesis being made is relevant to both receiving and *not* receiving satisfaction from food:



we must bear in mind that the pleasure of the sucking period is to a great extent a pleasure in taking, in being given something. It then becomes apparent that any quantitative divergence from the usual degree of pleasure gained can give rise to disturbances.

(Abraham, 1924a, p. 397)

Writing of cases in which he states that there has been an “abnormally” pleasurable sucking period, Abraham warns that repercussions follow:

In other cases the same period is abnormally rich in pleasure. It is well known how some mothers indulge the craving for pleasure in their infants by granting them every wish. The result is that it is extraordinary difficult to wean the child, and it sometimes takes two or three years to do it. In a few cases the child persists in taking food by sucking from a bottle until it is almost grown up.

(Abraham, 1924a, p. 397)

But both pleasurable and unpleasurable sucking period experiences leave the same mark: a pressing desire to obtain pleasure:

Whether in this early period of life the child has had to go without pleasure or has been indulged with an excess of it, the effect is the same. It takes leave of the sucking stage under difficulties. Since its need for pleasure has either not been sufficiently gratified or has become too insistent

(Abraham, 1924a, p. 397)

The fear of disappointments in the search for pleasure can return the infant, force it to regress, to the level of orality during which biting is prevalent and during which the forces of sadistic attitudes prevail, such as envy, which deserves to be highlighted again:

In the child who has been disappointed or over-indulged in the sucking period the pleasure in biting, which is also the most primitive form of sadism, will be especially emphasized. Thus the formation of character in such a child begins under the influence of an abnormally pronounced ambivalence of feeling. In practice such a disturbance of the development of character expresses itself in pronounced characteristics of hostility and dislike. It accounts for the presence of the abnormally over-developed envy which is so common.

(Abraham, 1924a, p. 398)

## **8 . From Coprophilic to Gastronomic Objects**

It can now be stated that for anality, 'money' is faeces; for orality, 'money' is food. The theoretical psychoanalytic writings of Freud and Abraham provide a strong foundation to support the hypothesis being made that argues for the connection of food, and the symbolic representatives of food, to both primary satisfaction and primary pleasure, and primary dissatisfaction and displeasure in the unconscious. This chapter has discussed and provided examples of the work by Karl Abraham that have illustrated the displaced actions and the sublimated behaviour in adults influenced by oral erotism and oral sadism. But, as a final topic in closing, it is necessary to discuss that which in orality becomes akin to anality's coprophilic objects, the equivalents to Ferenczi's postulated coprophilic symbolizations with stones, sand, marbles, etc. Here, the term '*gastronomic*' has been chosen as being the one best suited for the purpose of describing an object whose usage can be traced to its psychical linkage to 'food' in the unconscious. A gastronomic object stands symbolically for food-equating-money in the unconscious. But in the facts of everyday life 'money' *is* food and nutrition – the ability to buy and have food – thus '*money*' *is the ultimate gastronomic object*. 'Money' is itself food because of its prime access, but 'money' cannot be eaten *as* food.

All metal representatives of cash would perform well in the conversion from staid, mundane, objective object to psychical symbol in the unconscious. Cash would be followed by paper bills and notes embossed with their actual values. These would then be followed by cheques, cheque books, and I.O.U.s, bills and

bonds. The 'cashing in' and 'banking' actions performed by individuals transform and convert the latter list from nondescript paper into, in a sense, superior gastronomic symbols more readily available to be realized into providing pleasure and satisfaction. Today the credit and debit card reign ubiquitously.

The argument underlying the oral hypothesis is that 'money' is the primary symbolic representative of 'food'. Therefore the final thought in this chapter concerns the gold coin. Arguably, the gold coin would still be the most celebrated gastronomic object. Ferenczi's beautiful description provides a reminder of the perennial allure:

The eye takes pleasure at the sight of their lustre and colour, the ear at their metallic clink, the sense of touch at play with the round smooth discs, only the sense of smell comes away empty, and the sense of taste also has to be satisfied with the weak, but peculiar taste of the coins.

(Ferenczi, *The Ontogenesis of the Interest in Money*, 1914, p. 327)

The alluring sensuality of this passage is encased in an *orally* erotically charged sexuality of language that Ferenczi appeared not to notice and certainly did not want to develop. The "weak, but peculiar" taste that one has to be "satisfied" with and, indeed, the need in the first place to "sense" the "taste of the coins" in the mouth are clearly highly oral with sexual overtones. Although one could argue that the sight and appreciation of the gold coin would seem to draw the unconscious in all kinds of directions, there is little doubting its oral (and gastronomic) symbolism.

But what are the implications of this unconscious orality, and the psychoanalytic hypothesis that has been formed on orality in this chapter, for the narratives and discourses that feature mankind's corrupt relations with 'money', particularly when those narratives concern specific localities and settings? Such an exploration is undertaken in *Chapter Five*.

## Chapter Five

# ORALITY AND THE PSYCHOANALYTIC POSITIONING OF FINANCIAL CORRUPTION

### PART ONE: CORRUPTION AND ITS CONTEXTS

#### 1. Introduction

Unconsciously and then consciously a young child appears *unilaterally and spontaneously* to believe that *everything is free*. Like mother's milk; like ripe fruit hanging on a tree – ready for plucking and eating without any charge, without anything that is denominated as 'money' having to be handed over. It appears now, on the basis of the work that has preceded this present chapter, that one can with justification make such a statement. In effect, the research aim – an attempt at a psychoanalytic discourse on the roots of acts of financial corruption – in the course of the investigation had split into *two* aims – one could say in an entirely appropriate psychoanalytic manner. The initial main aim was the broaching of a theoretical psychoanalytic discourse on financial corruption within a specific historical and social context. When that work was first broached through a review of the psychoanalytic literature on 'money', the missing construction of possible oral theories with regard to 'money' created a second aim: the substantiation of the theoretical plausibility of a hypothesis on orality for the meaning of 'money' in the unconscious. It was essential for the work of this thesis that the possible orality of 'money' was hypothesized in order to join the anal theory and to fill the gap in theory that had been overlooked.

It would now seem that the stage has been reached where certain statements can be asserted with strong theoretical psychoanalytic grounds to support them. Certain strands can now begin to be pulled together in the tentative progress towards a discourse on financial corruption that is based on psychoanalytic

theory. The journey that has been embarked upon in this thesis has reached the place where the psychoanalytic methodology outlined in earlier chapters can now be put to work. It can be asserted with some confidence that the oral hypothesis as set out in *Chapter Four* will become very useful in answering the further probing that will take place in this chapter. With the addition of an oral hypothesis, the role that 'money' can play in the unconscious can now be ascribed a duality of theoretical possibilities, in a sense, a duality of theoretical existences: orality can join anality as a representation for the meaning of 'money' in the unconscious.

It is with an element of cautious relief that the statement can be made that the journey embarked upon at the outset has reached its destination point in this chapter despite, or rather *because* of, the detour, the infrastructural requirement of the formulation of an oral hypothesis. This formulation became necessary for the continuation of the journey and the arrival at the destination. The research question that became paramount, that is, can a hypothesis be formed that postulates orality as a source for an unconscious equation with 'money' – has now been answered in the affirmative. This now means that the spotlight can now be directed firmly on the other strand of the enquiry, that is to say, how a psychoanalytic understanding of 'money' also based on orality can be relevant to acts of financial corruption, particularly in the societal and cultural contexts emerging and transitional economies. In other words, we will now turn to the exploration of how the process of unrepressing a need based on *orality* may give rise in particular circumstances to acts of excessive greed and theft.

Following on from the discussions in *Chapter Four* it can be further asserted that fundamentally and primarily 'money' could exist in a repressed oral-erotically or oral-sadistically derived, sexual instinct charged, symbolic equation with 'food' and what 'food' means to mankind's self-preservation and self image.

Orality's rootedness in primal need, primal pleasure, and primal satisfaction precedes anality. This decision to extend the concept of the drives/instincts to bring in and incorporate attitudes to 'money' and attitudes to wealth creation

can be said to have Freud's overall backing as expressive of his general theory of sexuality. In 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' Freud writes that:

Psychoanalysis, which could not escape making *some* assumptions about the instincts, kept at first to the popular division of instincts typified in the phrase 'hunger and love'. At least there was nothing arbitrary in this; and by its help the analysis of the psychoneuroses was carried forward quite a distance. The concept of 'sexuality', and at the same time of the sexual instinct, had, it is true, to be extended so as to cover many things which could not be classed under the reproductive function; and this caused no little hubbub in an austere, respectable or merely hypocritical world.

(Freud S. , Beyond the Pleasure Principle, 1920, p. 51)

In the end the choices that the pioneering psychoanalysts made regarding the drives/instincts *were* at the same time both fundamental *and* arbitrary: *only* 'hunger and love' and not 'money' to provide protection from hunger and to provide for loved ones. Freud's own observations – both clinical and personal – should have revealed to him that it was highly likely that there was a 'need' to have 'money', a 'need' to make 'money'. But in psychoanalysis 'money' was relegated to being of only minor theoretical importance. While Freud was endeavouring to construct his disturbing theorisation of the death drive, there was still no reconsideration or reworking of his earlier passing theoretical statements on 'money'. However, in the same paper, Freud proceeds to make an apt general point about the validity and worthiness of theoretical constructions and the particular importance of observed material:

I do not dispute the fact that the third step in the theory of the instincts, which I have taken here, cannot lay claim to the same degree of certainty as the two earlier ones – the extension of the concept of sexuality and the hypothesis of narcissism. These two innovations were a direct translation of observation into theory and were no more open to sources of error than is inevitable in all such cases. It is true that my assertion of the regressive character of instincts also rests upon observed material – namely on the facts of

the compulsion to repeat. It may be, however, that I have overestimated their significance. It is perfectly legitimate to reject remorselessly theories which are contradicted by the very first steps in the analysis of observed facts, while yet being aware at the same time that the validity of one's own theory is only a provisional one.

(Freud S. , Beyond the Pleasure Principle, 1920, pp. 59-60)

Otto Fenichel in 'The Drive to Amass Wealth' asked: "Is there an instinctual drive to amass wealth?" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 69). As already discussed in *Chapter One*, this direct question was asked in the context of the division between the impact of ideological processes, such as 'market forces' and capitalism, and the "biological", but it remains essential to any probing of and thinking about financial corruption. The excessive greed and rapid increase in corrupt acts that are characteristic of former communist countries, for example, could be expressions of an *oral* instinct that was not previously given sufficient or any outlet for discharge. As previously mentioned, this was effectively observed by Mazin with regard to post-communist Russia: "Man was turned into a biological organism with an instinctive love of money, itself transfigured into a kind of mother's milk for adults" (Mazin, 2012, p. 155).

With the construction of a dual key, the formulation of an oral hypothesis to add to the standard classical anal theory of 'money', attempts to unlock the doors leading to the possible psychoanalytic unconscious motivations underlying acts of financial corruption are likely to be less daunting. A discourse that brings in *repressed orality* can now be considered with strong psychoanalytic theoretical support as being feasible, warranted, and even necessary. When considering psychoanalytic theories of 'money', a broader *psychoanalytic* discourse on probable unconscious meanings can be undertaken. What will be presented now is that with the addition and alternative of orality – which, as argued, was ignored and unexplored because of the entrenchment of anality – it is highly likely that: the possible existence of a drive to accumulate 'money' and wealth could be sourced to orality. And as a result: it could be possible that an act of financial corruption could be positioned as a derivative or a fixation or a perversion of an oral drive.

## 2. Repressions and the Ego

In attempting to fill in the gap that psychoanalytic theory on 'money' has left over the decades and extending the sexual instinct via the oral drive and its repressions into the realm of 'money' and financial wealth creation, a question arises as to the *nature* of the repressions that could be taking place. Although this chapter takes into consideration the more traditional Freudian psychoanalytic forms of repression that involve the mechanisms of displacement of sadistic and erotic tendencies, another more general repression, one that is more phylogenetic in its nature, and more social in scope, is worth noting at this junction and provides further justification for the decision to maintain the anality theory whilst also adding the new oral hypothesis. The question that could be posed is this: *Was there a repression of the importance of food to mankind?* It will be argued that this links to a repression of a sense of humiliation at being held ransom by biological need. It may be that human beings repressed their humiliation at the recognition of the fact that despite their evolution, despite all their technological progress, they still had a dependency on *food* for survival. Humiliation could be sparked by the realization of the extent of their dependency: an almost infantilizing necessity to be assured of food security. They needed food whatever the cost. What a humiliation that there was still one thing that they could not do without! They could manage to live without sex. But there was something even more fundamental than the ability to breed and reproduce that they were not able to master going without. Repressed humiliation at extreme dependency *could* be discharged as contempt. That is, the affect of severe anxiety surrounding this dependency on food, and thus on 'money' the means of its acquirement, could be transformed into a contempt that was displaced and transferred onto something that would be deemed as worthless: *faeces*. Something as important as 'money', *must*, has to become *meaningless* and rendered as nothing, as *shit*. Was not, and is not, the use of the symbolizing of faeces as 'money' also in connection with the *shame*, guilt, and humiliation of the repressed knowledge of the craving, need, and desire for 'money'? There will be further reflections on this matter in *Chapter Six*.



The construction of an oral hypothesis allows the possibility of an underlying repression of this kind and its accompanying state of repressed fear of hunger, starvation, and famine. It also allows for its unrepression. With an oral hypothesis for the meaning of 'money' in the unconscious, the agency of the ego in particular may strive to operate actively as *loving* the chosen object that constitutes itself as 'money' or 'money'-related instead of despising or dismissing it. On the relation between repression and the ego, Freud writes that:

Repression, we have said, proceeds from the ego; we might say with greater precision that it proceeds from the self-respect of the ego. The same impressions, experiences, impulses and desires that one man indulges or at least works over consciously will be rejected with the utmost indignation by another, or even stifled before they enter consciousness. The difference between the two, which contains the conditioning factor of repression, can easily be expressed in terms which enable it to be explained by the libido theory. We can say that the one man has set up an *ideal* in himself by which he measures his actual ego, while the other has formed no such ideal. For the ego the formation of an ideal would be the conditioning factor of repression.

(Freud, 1914, pp. 93-94)

With the ego (Freud, 1923) being one's relationship with the outside world or the impact of the outside world's relationship with you, repression would operate as a pathogenic conflict of cultural and moral ideas with the human being's charged, cathected, instinctual drives. The proposition of the unrepression of an oral-related *need* for 'money' allows an urge for, a love for, 'money' to be characterized as *love* and "love is assessed like any other activity of the ego" (Freud, 1914, p. 99):

Loving in itself, in so far as it involves longing and deprivation, lowers self-regard; whereas being loved, having one's love returned, and possessing the loved object, raises it once more. When libido is repressed, the erotic cathexis is felt as a severe depletion of the ego, the satisfaction of love is impossible, and the re-enrichment of the ego can be effected only by a withdrawal of libido from its objects.

The return of the object-libido to the ego and its transformation into narcissism represents, as it were, a happy love once more

(Freud, 1914, pp. 99-100)

Freud proceeds to make this crucial point: “Being in love consists in a flowing-over of ego-libido on to the object. It has the power to remove repressions and re-instate perversions. It exalts the sexual object into a sexual ideal” (Freud, 1914, p. 100). And further: “The ego ideal opens up an important avenue for the understanding of group psychology. In addition to its individual side, this ideal has a social side; it is also the common ideal of a family, a class or a nation” (Freud, 1914, p. 101).

### **3. Defining ‘Money’ and ‘Food’**

In preceding chapters the term ‘money’ has been kept in inverted commas. In *Chapter One* the traditional meanings and usages of the terms ‘money’ and wealth were examined through an engagement with thinkers such as Adam Smith (1776), Marx (1844), and Keynes (1936). But given the symbolic connection that has been hypothesized between ‘money’ and orality, it is now necessary to probe further the question of *why* people need and want something called ‘money’. With the link to primal orality, it is possible to answer the question ‘Why do you need money?’ by the statement ‘*money*’ is needed to maximize pleasure. It is also possible now to offer a first definition of ‘money’ as being what is necessary for the maximization of pleasure. This would encompass the necessity of acquiring food. Although food is grown and is inherently free as a free good, food products have to be paid for. For example, apples are ‘free’: a tree in the garden or in an orchard can be picked at will, but a bottle of cider or apple vinegar or a carton of apple juice are products of apples that have to be made out of the processing of apples. Using a definition of ‘money’ that includes the maximization of pleasures, in addition to the traditional definitions of ‘money’ that centre on its role as the means of exchange and means of valuation, allows for the following assumption to be made with regard to what constitutes ‘food’. If ‘money’ is maximizing pleasure, and ‘money’ under the orality hypothesis symbolically represents

‘food’, the assumption would follow that whatever ‘money’ is able to purchase *also* represents ‘food’ and *also* provides pleasures. In other words, the unconscious meanings of ‘food’ could be a far wider group of products and activities that provide sustenance than merely edible products.

This assumption has important ramifications for what could be considered as ‘food’ other than food to eat. In this chapter a wider definition of ‘food’ will be used, one where it will be defined and approached as not only what is consumed in order to maintain the physical body and its biological functioning, but also, and almost as importantly, as *anything that feeds one’s ego, one’s psychic self*, and thus mental functioning. In this definition, therefore, a new car or an expensive watch or a designer dress or the most fashionable pair of trainers or a 36-bedroomed villa or the latest mobile phone may be, and often *is*, as sustenance providing to particular people, and as absolutely vital to have, as a loaf of bread, a T-bone steak, or a three-course meal. As is observable from these examples, what is already apparent is the question of excess, overconsumption, and even greed. Should one know when one has enough ‘food’ in this broader definition? The answer to that is both yes and no, in that what is ‘enough’ pertains to the unconscious as much as to what is conscious, and furthermore prey to pressure from socio-political structures.

Indeed, when forced to have just common *food*, as in basic food provisions purchased to eat for physical health and biological wellbeing, and having to forgo other ego-feeding ‘food’ products, or the ability to acquire them, would not resentment, anger, trouble and even violence be the result? A good example of such occurrences would be during times of economic depressions and austerity cuts. Even some of those not forced by necessity to use ‘food banks’ – an interestingly gastronomic term in itself – generally seem to bemoan vociferously the drop in their “living standards”. The need to access the abstracted, gastronomic forms and representations of ‘money’ – paper notes, coins, credit and debit cards, wage and salary rises – becomes dangerously paramount during such “depressed” times in order to purchase derivatives of ‘food’ in as many concrete and abstracted forms as possible.

This stretched, flexible definition of what constitutes ‘food’ and the preceding orality-infused definition of ‘money’ means that the inverted commas can now be removed, as now the terms in which those words are going to be used in this chapter have been stated. The most important contextual consequence of the definitions is that if money is defined as the necessity for the maximization of pleasures, and life is about the pursuit of pleasures, then money is necessary in order to have the ability to live life to its maximum capacities for the realization of pleasures: *Money then becomes necessary for life*. Happiness, love, food security, stable living environment, peace – these are just some things that could be said to be pleasures which one seeks to enjoy in life. To have the money to do so then becomes necessary to enable people to achieve their satisfactions. Thus, *acquiring money becomes an aim that has to be satisfied to achieve these pleasure goals*. That would have an impact on any discussion of financial corruption. But so too, would the following consideration: corrupted, that is, as a *corrupted* aim or a perverted aim, money could be pursued for *itself* as a satisfaction: it could become *an aim in itself*.

#### **4. Man Corrupt – or Corrupted?**

Let us return to a quote already deployed in the first chapter of this thesis, one by Joseph Nye, the academic and writer on corruption and national affairs:

Corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence.

(Nye, 1967)

In the same chapter a definition of financial corruption was articulated in the following way: *‘Financial corruption: the abuse of power, privilege, influence, or legal access, for personal monetary gain’*. But, as we proceed to discuss psychoanalysis and financial corruption the following point needs to be made clear at the outset: the investigation’s focus is not on the economic developmental, social, and cultural crises manifested by the surge in acts of

financial corruption *today*, (although of course they hover implicitly as they were the impetus to the preoccupations that led to the research recorded in these pages). The focus in the remaining chapters will be on investigating how psychoanalysis might contribute possible explanations into *an individual's unconscious motivations for such acts*. Furthermore, it will centre on what impact the *historical* situation could have had on people living at a particular time, in the 1960's in certain African countries, at a time when acts of financial corruption began to dominate economic, social, and cultural spheres in the region. A return to the past to explain what is in effect the beginnings of a contemporary illness that has been likened to a "cancer" (Wolfensohn, 1996), a cancer that has kept on growing and whose beginnings need to be examined in order to try to determine the probable causations of the growth. What kind of forces in a society could give rise to a corrupt relationship between an individual and money?

Developing countries in particular, and those who live in them, have come to embody financial corruption in much popular discourse. The contexts in which such critiques have arisen have to be examined, in order to explore the possible psychoanalytic impacts of sudden wealth availability in developing or transitional countries. What is to be attempted in this chapter is an analysis of how certain key psychoanalytic theories – what could be termed 'blueprint' Freudian psychoanalytic theories for their architectural and foundational aspects might be useful in the examination of *the individual and the roots of financial corruption*, and the interaction between new wealth and new power in a 1960s newly independent African country. Nigeria is chosen as exemplary here, as that country had been the object of serious early research. With the benefit of the newly forged second key to enable the unlocking of the door leading to a discussion of the role of money in the unconscious, the question of financial corruption briefly touched upon in *Chapter One*, will take on a new dimension and an added fullness. With the aid of an oral hypothesis a real engagement is brought into being with what could be at the source of a subject's given unconscious mental processes and their interactions with the complex social issues emanating from both the group and the society to which that he belongs.

The portals through which entry is gained on the theme of financial corruption and through which discussions are brought to bear on how psychoanalytic theoretical formulations can bring understandings to these difficult and problematic issues are four texts by leading corruption analysts written during the 1960s on corruption and Africa. They comprise the book *Corruption in Developing Countries* by Wraith and Simpkins, and three papers: Kenneth T. Young's 1961 paper, 'New Politics in New States'; Colin Leys (1965) 'What is the Problem about Corruption?'; and David Bayley (1966) 'The Effects of Corruption in a Developing Nation'. They were chosen as representative for their clarity, their identification of the issues at stake in both broad and narrow terms, their detail, their acknowledgement of the novelty of the situation and the accuracy of their historically abstracted observations and predictions. The papers of David Bayley and Colin Leys will form the backbone of an attempt to 'analyze' financial corruption psychoanalytically – in terms of the individual subject's psyche within the complexities of social arrangements. They will be assessed together in a later section of this chapter, with an additional rationale for their choice. Further, it was a deliberate intention that these authors were *western* observers, because in the period under examination – the 1960s – both the study of corruption academically and the discourse of psychoanalysis were inherently western discourses. A critique of this (western) aspect of these disciplines lies beyond the immediate scope of this thesis but needs nevertheless to be stated, even though the overall perspective I have taken throughout is that of a *return to Freud*. Thus the emphasis and the approach chosen aim for a simplified but substantive citing of blueprint classical Freudian theoretical writings in order to sketch some of the key thinking that could be useful in forming the basis of distinctive psychoanalytic *Freudian* narratives on what could potentially underlie an individual's act of financial corruption.

## **5. Starving The Ego, Feeding The Ego**

We are now in the Africa of the 1960s and money is tempting the soul of a given individual in a newly independent country. This section stands as an attempt to draw an initial sketch of the landscape that was in existence in, say Nigeria, at that time. We will try to provide an initial insight into the probable

situation of people both ordinary and those in position of leadership. It is apposite to begin by recalling the general scene described by Wraith and Simpkins in *Corruption in Developing Countries*, as they opened the door to a study of the rise of financial corruption in Africa:

In Africa corruption flourishes as luxuriantly as the bush and the weeds which it so much resembles, taking the goodness from the soil and suffocating the growth of plants which have been carefully, and expensively, bred and tended. The forces ranged against it are negligible; not negligible in fire or indignation or idealism, but quite simply negligible in weight.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, pp. 12-13)

Importantly, as they set the scene they state that:

The new African countries are poor, and are trying to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. The public men on whom wealth has descended in a sudden and unimaginable torrent are not heirs to a tradition of comfortable bank balances and public responsibility; they are *nouveaux riches* tycoons of public administration. Those who happened to be in the right place at the right time were not all of them cultivated, educated or upright men. They are not to be compared with the men on whom public responsibility descended, in Cabinet, civil service or town hall, in the rising tide of Victorian prosperity in Britain.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, p. 13)

In these new African countries new social conditions were being created due to the deep transformations that were taking place. As a result new types of African men were coming into existence who were in stark contrast to a landscape dominated by poverty. They are the newly enriched: the *bourgeoisie to be* with access to power, public position, and money. They are the *nouveaux riches* who wanted money and were striving to amass wealth while surrounded by poverty.

The portal that Wraith and Simpkins provide in their book to this landscape of the 1960s is invaluable. They were based in Nigeria in West Africa, which

provides a focus for a closer examination of what was happening on the ground in an African country with respect to corrupt acts. In the following long but excellently detailed citation they linguistically and visually unveil at necessary length the historical epoch that prevailed and the actions that were common and routine on a daily level lower down the scale of financial enrichment activities.

For while some of the corruption of which one hears in high places has at least a robust and buccaneering flavour, the corruption which one experiences oneself, or learns of at first hand through the tribulations of African dependants, is depressingly mean and squalid; and it is all-pervasive. It is distressing that people who in the life of family, clan or tribe are generous with one another to the point of destitution should in the world of cash services, and among strangers, become so mean that the simplest service is extorted, quite illicitly, for a 'dash' or rake-off. It is incongruous that in the merciful professions of nursing and medicine the out-patient must find his two-pence for admission, at the head of the queue, to his rightful place; that in the most ignominious of human emergencies the bed-pan can only be secured for a penny; that the pound note is looked for under the pillow of the consulting room of the Government doctor. To put a man in the way of a job at £5 a month ought, one would have supposed, to be a simple human kindness among people so underprivileged that to have a job at all is to be an aristocrat. To spoil it by the demand of a rake-off of several shillings a week for a year seems grasping and callous. To learn of the messenger who admits the 'applicant' to the presence of the clerk who may help him onwards to the boss, but only in return for a series of illicit tolls, is not to learn of human nature at its best.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, p. 17)

The factors pointed out acutely in the above citation are the social relations and structural dependencies that are at the same time both evolving and entrenched in the society. The Nigerian slang word of "dash" for a bribe or underhand payment is still very much in use today.

At the other end of the scale of money, power, and influence were the acts committed by bureaucrats, councillors, and politicians, particularly bribes for contracts. A "post", a "position of power", or an "office" seemed to be held with the knowledge and expectation that the particular post, position, or office, would provide opportunities for self-enrichment whether in an overtly corrupt manner



or not. But, perhaps, instead of asking what the “holder” does to the status and moral claim of the “office” with his or her corrupt actions, one could question what *the office* might be doing to its incumbent with *its* potentially corrupting embodiment of high achievement, rich reward, and promising provision of satisfaction of whatever the ego desires and wants. The common saying “power corrupts” could be noted here as being related significantly to the conscious and unconscious power embedded within and emanating from an all-powerful office that envelopes the new office-holder’s mind. Corruption as “an abuse” of public office is a standard assessment. But is the ‘corrupt man’ abusing his office or is the office abusing the man? Is man corrupt – or is man corrupted? There will be further reflection on “the office” in *Chapter Six*.

Turning to Kenneth Young’s ‘New Politics in New States’ frames the fraught nature of what is happening in Nigeria and other African nations during the 1960s in terms that reveal that these critical societal transformations were taking place in a complicated and competitive global context with intense geopolitical implications. Young observes that around the world “over a billion people are experiencing the difficulties and trials of new nation-hood” (Young, 1961, p. 494) and that:

At the very time that the governments of these new states are struggling to get on their own feet and set their own course, they are overwhelmed by competing ideas, people and organizations descending upon them from the Atlantic and Soviet worlds. They have little or no time to reflect upon issues of national policy or to study new programs. Of course, the contest of which they are the object is also advantageous to them. It gives them an importance out of proportion to their strength; they can play one side off against the other to get more aid and to increase their own freedom of manoeuvre in foreign and domestic policies. Nevertheless, this contest as to who shall aid them complicates their political development; they are compelled to make basic political decisions in conditions of tension and turmoil.

(Young, 1961, p. 494)

Wraith and Simpkins focus eyes the necessary historical background and colonial contextualization for the situation in Nigeria by the time the 1960s arrived:

For fifty or sixty years Nigeria was a British colony ruled by foreigners, with the result that government was always 'they', and never 'we'; a friend up to a point, it was an enemy at the deepest level; commanding respect and esteem, it never won loyalty or affection. It was legitimate field for plunder, though the precautions which it took against being plundered were usually adequate. Its greatest fault was an inability to delegate, trust or train; to the very end colonial service officers worked themselves into the ground with a conscientiousness that would have been awe-inspiring if it had been directed towards producing capable successors; as it was, it was often pointless. The results of this were, first, and somewhat nebulously no doubt, a habit of African irresponsibility towards those in power, carried over into the days when power came to Africans themselves; and second, an almost total absence of senior African civil servants who had themselves been trained in honest and responsible attitudes to public business.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, p. 46)

Such negative colonial legacies that Wraith and Simpkins describe as being "carried over" must have meant that among the newly-empowered senior civil servants in the new offices of the now independent nation would be people who had dishonest and irresponsible attitudes towards how the affairs of state should be conducted with regard to finance. Wraith and Simpkins imply that corruption was inevitable among bureaucrats and government ministers because of "a missing generation of Africans" (1963, p. 47) that was capable of acting without ulterior financial motives in many public posts of responsibility, power, and influence. The situation with councillors and council staff was even worse because they were "ill-paid poor relations of the civil service, were even more pliable, subject to the will of ill-qualified and frequently unscrupulous councillors" (1963, p. 47).

One particular Nigerian report cited is entitled “Perverseness in Awarding Contracts” and includes this account:

A charming case of ‘perverseness’ is quoted over the award of a tailoring contract, the total value of which was £16 7s Od. A certain councillor extracted £3, or over 20 per cent, from a tailor for the promise of this contract, in blissful ignorance of the fact that two of his colleagues on the Council had done the same in respect of other tailors. The resultant necessary division of this contract into three, to the value of £5 12s 0d for each part, was scarcely worth the layout of £3, as the tailors bitterly complained.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, p. 24)

The contemporary view of the Nigerian academic, Nierum Okogbule, writing in the *Journal of Financial Crime*, places in their societal context these attitudes and behaviours that clearly prevailed among both senior and lower civil servants.

While a number of factors may give rise to a situation where a person saddled with a particular responsibility would deviate from the acceptable conduct, the point remains that such conduct is inherently detrimental to the interests of the larger society. Indeed, a fundamental understanding of the ramifications of corruption can only be feasible if these socio-economic factors are adequately taken into consideration.

(Okogbule, 2006, p. 95)

But Okogbule is speaking about *the present* and not the historical. In other words, the negative attitudes and behaviours that Wraith and Simpkins portray of those newly in office during the 1960s are *still* observable today. The fact that such observations can be made now reveals the extent to which financial corruption has developed and spread. It had, indeed, behaved like a “cancer”. The roots of acts of financial corruption – including socio-economic, political, and psychoanalytic forces – *were* being planted and already taking root during the early years of nationhood. By the time that Okogbule and other Nigerian

academics were publishing their analyses and responses, their country had already become virtually synonymous with corrupt practices, as recounted by Daniel Jordan Smith (2007) in *A Culture of Corruption – Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria*. Smith provides examples of how even the language of communication itself becomes corrupted, with the true meaning of what is actually being said or asked for consciously *hidden* and codified: “Typical ways Nigerian police ask for money include: ‘Any weekend for us?’, ‘We are loyal, sir’, ‘Give us something for cigarettes’, ‘Any ‘pure water?’, ‘Any ‘roger’ today?’ or simply ‘I salute you’, followed by a look of expectation” (Smith, 2007, p. 62). Corrupt acts when carried out in broad daylight by “everyday” common, ordinary people are still carried out using secretive, manipulative conduct and language.

Frantz Fanon, who witnessed the struggles for African countries’ liberation and nationhood at first hand in Africa both as a psychiatrist and as a political and social theorist (Macey, 2000), took a deeper journey into the minds of members of the African bourgeoisie who were entering public posts and gaining power and influence. In *The Wretched of the Earth* Fanon focuses directly on the emerging, transitional African states that are being born out of previous colonial domination. He paints stark, excoriating pictures of the emerging bourgeoisie’s attitudes, behaviours, and relations with their own people. The potentially malign exercise of power and influence over the people of a new nation is put under a microscopic examination and there are corrosive denunciations of leadership and the leader as immoral, co-opted, and ineffective, or at best disillusioned. Money and corruption are never far away from what Fanon structures as the capitalistically induced ills of society. The leader can be a person who “knowingly becomes the aider and abettor of the young bourgeoisie which is plunging into the mire of corruption and pleasure” (Fanon, 1961, p. 134).

The national bourgeoisie turns its back more and more on the interior and on the real facts of its undeveloped country, and tends to look towards the former mother country and the foreign capitalists who count on its obliging compliance. As it does not share its profits with

the people, and in no way allows them to enjoy any of the dues that are paid to it by the big foreign companies, it will discover the need for a popular leader to whom will fall the dual role of stabilizing the regime and of perpetuating the domination of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois dictatorship of under-developed countries draws its strength from the existence of a leader. We know that in the well-developed countries the bourgeois dictatorship is the result of the economic power of the bourgeoisie. In the under-developed countries on the contrary the leader stands for moral power, in whose shelter the thin and poverty-stricken bourgeoisie of the young nation decides to get rich.

(Fanon, 1961, p. 133)

Western sovereign powers' central aim was to acquire money and wealth and, during imperialism and colonization, to seize territories and countries that would enable that aim to be successfully realized (Kwarteng, 2011; Ferguson, 2003). In Kwasi Kwarteng's *Ghosts of Empire* it is made explicit that the focus of the British state, and of the men who formed the cadres who expanded and administered the territories acquired during colonialism, was mercantilism, trade, and making money. Kwarteng sets out how in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Nigeria British troops were sent to back up mercantile desires for more trading posts. Europe's colonizing capitalism was based on economic and financial power and was backed by military might. The former colonial power's technologically superior military weapons would also have created desire among the African elites. But that military power was ultimately deployed for the aim of creating economic superiority via trade. The European male Other, after the independence of African countries, revealed in his financial, trade, industrial, and developmental dealings with the Africans newly in charge of their own countries and national treasuries that the former western powers would still work to retain the upper hand by putting western interests first. Africans might be unable to fulfil their desires as Africans, be those desires financial, personal, political, or developmental. Fanon observed that this capitalistic process would end in the production of consumers. Consumers filled with desires who, presumably, would require money to *buy* the goods.

Capitalism, in its early days, saw in the colonies a source of raw materials which, once turned into manufactured goods, could be distributed on the European market. After a phase of accumulation of capital, capitalism has today come to modify its conception of the profit-earning capacity of a commercial enterprise. The colonies have become a market. The colonial population is a customer who is ready to buy goods. ... What the factory-owners and finance magnates of the mother country expect from their government is not that it should decimate the colonial peoples, but that it should safeguard with the help of economic conventions their own 'legitimate interests'.

(Fanon, 1961, p. 51)

The African male would clearly have been observing the operations of this male Other with so much power and wealth and with his own priorities. He would not have been able to escape these observations of the capitalistic European man because the African man had been a colonial subject: living on his own soil but under the command of another man. Without money, the African would come to feel, you had nothing, you were nothing. It seemed that so much depended upon having access to money, including physical survival. It is apt to recall here the humiliation spoken of earlier in respect of man's inability to rid himself of his biologically dependent relation to food. But the anxieties and humiliation caused by lack of money would be devastatingly deep because they would extend further to bring in our widened definition of food. Thus lack of money could lead to the annihilation of personal desires and ambitions and the failure to fulfil or implement personal and national needs. Leadership at the very top of government would be critical in setting the agenda to implement new social conditions, but so, too, would be the new men in the new nations who were in charge in other important, influential posts and offices. They would be forming, in a sense that we shall explore later in this chapter, the new ego ideals.

But as Young observes there were serious problems in removing the "dead hand of the past" (Young, 1961, p. 496) as colonialism in most countries had "left the new nations such a paucity of trained nationals that they found themselves with only a handful of competent planners, administrators, engineers, businessmen, economists, doctors and other specialists" (Young, 1961, p. 495). This recalls

Wraith and Simpkins note earlier of a missing, uncreated, untrained generation of Africans. Young's dead hand of the past was reaching further into the present of the 1960s and handicapping the work that needed to be done on the national level and, for many groups in society, curtailing individual and group dreams of progress into a prosperous future:

Neither the Western-trained leaders nor their Western advisors fully understood the nature of the profound changes they were launching. Sooner or later the rhythm of modernization broke into different tempos. The radical changes produced new social groups; there were university graduates without jobs, factories without technicians, and plans without managers. The new leaders were operating in different decades or even centuries from the mentality of nearly the whole population.

(Young, 1961, pp. 497-498)

But the dizzying and disorientating experiences caused by the "profound changes" that Young speaks of can be experienced by all. The leaders and the people alike are living dual, evolving existences as formerly colonized and newly liberated people. It has to be interjected that the new nations' leaders perhaps do not deserve to have to bear *all* the harshness of the critiques from writers like Fanon, for despite being leaders they, too, are coming into an existence that is blurry and unfocused, untried and undesigned. Although Fanon's following points are made with regard to the subjects who live ordinary lives, he begins with a statement that could apply equally to the men now ruling over those very same subjects:

everything seemed to be so simple before: the bad people were on one side, and the good on the other. The clear, unreal, idyllic light of the beginning is followed by a semi-darkness that bewilders the senses. The people find out that the iniquitous fact of exploitation can wear a black face, or an Arab one; and they raise the cry of 'Treason!' But the cry is mistaken; and the mistake must be corrected. The treason is not national, it is social. The people must be taught to cry 'Stop thief!'"

(Fanon, 1961, p. 116)

But the “thieving” African man *desired* that very same thing, those very same possessions as the Europeans who had been in charge had also possessed. Why would he not say “I want”? Indeed, perhaps he would even try to obtain his desires via illegitimate means, such as theft. If that thing, especially money, was so important to the European male Other, then he, the African, should be in possession of this thing, too. What Otto Fenichel brings into contention in ‘The Drive to Amass Wealth’ (1938) is that *social structuring forces* play an important role in structuring the comprehension, desire for, and meanings of money. There is “reciprocal action between basic instincts and social system, the latter modifying the former, and in turn the altered instinct structure influencing the social system” (Fenichel, 1938, p. 85). Such social forces would thus impact and influence how what he terms ‘money-mindedness’ was developed, as: “The instincts represent the general tendency, while matters of *money* and the desire to become wealthy represent a specific form which the general tendency can assume only in the presence of certain definite social conditions” (Fenichel, 1938, p. 85). The historian Irene Gendzier observes that: “What Fanon did with extraordinary power and effectiveness was to expose the psychic dimension of exploitation and to erase thereby the notion that the private individual could be isolated from his social context” (Gendzier, 1976, p. 504). She explains Fanon’s work as a psychiatrist as helping “his patients reintegrate themselves into society, a society that was often diagnosed as exploitative and oppressive. This diagnosis affected therapy if only to raise the contradictions involved to the level of consciousness” (Gendzier, 1976, p. 504).

What we have attempted so far in this first part of *Chapter Five*, is to put forward an initial portrayal of the national and psychic landscape observable in an African country during the 1960s. Many people would have been left in the position of being largely starved of money and having suffered the humiliation of being forced to live as an inferior subject under the rule of a foreign power. As indicated at the beginning, we will ultimately undertake a psychoanalytic analysis of financial corruption. However, in order to conduct such an analysis it



is necessary to once again set out the classical Freudian psychoanalytic notions that will underpin it, here, narcissism and castration in relation to the ego. However, it is important here to provide a reminder that, in adherence with the stipulated remit of a return to Freud, what will be outlined are not debates over psychoanalytic tenets; what is to be extracted from relevant classical texts are certain principles as Freud himself outlined them at the time. As we saw, Freud may have created the tools and mechanisms himself that would have been necessary for further work on money but did not use them. What is accordingly set in motion below is *a dialogue with Freud's theory-making* in two specific areas – narcissism and castration, drawing upon their usefulness for the particular circumstances that we are now looking at. Thus, only the straightforward reminders of what was available theoretically to Freud – substantively extracted – are necessary for the central purpose of this thesis, which is that of progressing towards a psychoanalytic theoretical discourse on financial corruption.

## **6. Feeding the Ego with Narcissism**

We return to Freud as he continues to develop his thinking on instincts/drives and the libido. Let us start with Freud admitting that “the hypothesis of separate ego-instincts and sexual instincts (that is to say, the libido theory) rests scarcely at all upon a psychological basis, but derives its principal support from biology” (Freud, 1914, p. 79), and that, “It may turn out that, most basically and on the longest view, sexual energy – libido – is only the product of a differentiation in the energy at work generally in the mind” (Freud, 1914, p. 79).

Freud has already told us (as cited at the very beginning of this chapter) that the instincts of hunger and love were the two basic assumptions made at the foundational moments of psychoanalysis. This thinking formed the backbone of our elaboration in *Chapter Four* on the possibilities that emerge with an oral hypothesis on money: that money is food and thus the target of the oral drive, a “sexual”, sexualized, hunger for money instinct/drive. The individual, hungry to have many things, is trying to feed himself. The ego (wounded, humiliated, depleted in self-regard) is focused on its narcissistic needs. The processes of

repression and unrepression of these libidinal forces are in full sway. How can we try to envisage what could be taking place?

As explored in *Chapter Four*, the earliest satisfaction is gained by the infant from being fed. The infant's primary state of auto-erotism proceeds to narcissistic activities that are pleasurable to the ego. "We say that a human being has originally two sexual objects – himself and the woman who nurses him – and in doing so we are postulating a primary narcissism in everyone" (Freud, 1914, p. 88). But what is 'narcissism' and why would the ego need to be supplied with it? Freud writes that:

The term narcissism is derived from clinical description and was chosen by Paul Naeke in 1899 to denote the attitude of a person who treats his own body in the same way in which the body of a sexual object is ordinarily treated – who looks at it, that is to say, strokes it and fondles it till he obtains complete satisfaction through these activities. Developed to this degree, narcissism has the significance of a perversion that has absorbed the whole of the subject's sexual life, and it will consequently exhibit the characteristics which we expect to meet with in the study of all perversions.

(Freud, 1914, p. 73)

In her classic book *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* Anna Freud (1936) confirms that the ego's narcissistic need to increase such primary pleasure and satisfaction is vital in order to ward off and defend against pain and bad feelings, particularly the affects that occur during situations of conflict with the instincts/drives when it is striving to attain pleasure.

So far, the reasons for the defence against affect lie quite simply in the conflict between ego and instinct. There is, however, another and more primitive relation between the ego and the affects which has no counterpart in that of the ego to the instincts. Instinctual gratification is always primarily something pleasurable. But an affect may be primarily pleasurable or painful, according to its nature. If the ego has nothing to object to in a particular instinctual process and so does not

ward off an affect on that ground, its attitude towards it will be determined entirely by the pleasure-principle: it will welcome pleasurable affects and defend itself against painful ones. Indeed, even if owing to the repression of an instinct the ego is impelled by anxiety and a sense of guilt to defend itself against the accompanying affect, we can still see traces of selection in accordance with the pleasure-principle.

(Freud A. , 1936, p. 66)

Freud directly connected narcissism with the “psychology of the ego” (1914, p. 82). He determined a similarity to organic pain in that when in such pain the focus of attention of the subject became concentrated on the self and the source of the pain, in other words, one was not interested in the external world, even to the extent of withdrawing love from objects.

Freud poses two questions in relation to the *kind* of energies that are being utilized – particularly that which emanate from the ego – which are relevant to this discussion because the questions help to clarify what kind of energy would potentially be driving the seeking of pleasurable narcissistic food – for example, money – from the environmental surroundings:

In the first place, what is the relation of the narcissism of which we are now speaking to auto-erotism, which we have described as an early state of the libido? Secondly, if we grant the ego a primary cathexis of libido, why is there any necessity for further distinguishing a sexual libido from a non-sexual energy of the ego-instincts? Would not the postulation of a single kind of psychical energy save us all the difficulties of differentiating an energy of the ego-instincts from ego-libido, and ego-libido from object-libido?

(Freud, 1914, p. 76)

Freud was defining the libido as being sexual energy and as being separate from the energy emanating from the ego-instincts. Freud proposes that the ego comes into existence with narcissism: the ego comes into existence with subjectivity, the recognition of self-love or alienation from the self.

As regards the first question, I may point out that we are bound to suppose that a unity comparable to the ego cannot exist in the individual from the start; the ego has to be developed. The auto-erotic instincts, however, are there from the very first; so there must be something added to auto-erotism – a new psychical action – in order to bring about narcissism.

(Freud, 1914, pp. 76-77)

Freud does not specify what this “new psychical action” actually is, but his statement that auto-erotic instincts are there from “the very first” is a categorical one, and it is a danger to confuse auto-erotism with narcissism, although they both imply self-love. The implication is that without the development of an ego and a narcissistic identification with the self not only does one not fully exist as a subject, but one also does not exist as a fully sexually energised subject. And, if one has not developed an ego, then, presumably, one has not developed ego libido.

Drive energy and what the ego’s energy is interested in can become one and the same. Ego instincts and sexual instincts *can* become aligned particularly during times of negative impacts: “Here libido and ego-interest share the same fate and are once more indistinguishable from each other. The familiar egoism of the sick person covers both” (Freud, 1914, p. 82). Karl Abraham (1911) worked extensively on depressive illnesses and brings an understanding of what takes place regarding the *feelings* of “the frequent ideas of impoverishment”, as he connects these feelings closely to loss of libido:

Certain features commonly present in states of depression become comprehensible if we accept the well-founded conclusions of psychoanalytic experience. Take, for instance, the frequent ideas of impoverishment. The patient complains, let us say, that he and his family are exposed to starvation. If a pecuniary loss has actually preceded the onset of his illness, he will assert that he cannot possibly endure the blow and that he is completely ruined. These strange ideas, which often entirely dominate the patient’s thoughts, are

explicable from the identification of libido and money – of sexual and pecuniary ‘power’ – with which we are so familiar. The patient’s libido has disappeared from the world, as it were. Whereas other people can invest their libido in the objects of the external world he has no such capital to expend. His feeling of poverty springs from a repressed perception of his own incapacity to love.

(Abraham, Notes on the Psycho-Analytical Investigation and Treatment of Manic-Depressive Insanity and Allied Conditions, 1911, p. 148)

Lack of money would feed directly into and correspond itself to the lack of libidinal energy emanating from the ego – and also connect itself to lack of sexually charged libidinal energy: for example, orality, as we have been arguing. Freud’s exposition of narcissistic pain as analogous with organic pain in that an alignment takes place between egotistic and biological needs, and allows for the following statement: *feeding the body and feeding the ego could become as one: money as food will be seen as doing both consciously and unconsciously*. There would be no separation of the desires of the ego and the desires of the sexual instincts. Money could be considered as legitimate food for the welfare of both.

With the oral hypothesis of money as food and thus of primary pleasure and satisfaction, narcissistic activities that seek for whatever reasons to take the self as foremost and to increase self-regard for the ego could involve or circulate around money. But what does Freud consider to be ‘self-regard’?

self-regard appears to us to be an expression of the size of the ego; what the various elements are which go to determine that size is irrelevant. Everything a person possesses or achieves, every remnant of the primitive feeling of omnipotence which his experience has confirmed, helps to increase his self-regard.

(Freud, 1914, p. 98)

Here, a point on castration should be mentioned prior to its own sub-section below: if castration is positioned as ‘being made to go without’, then the wound, the injury, the aftermath of castration would leave their damages in the ego. We

have seen that Freud has indicated that possessions are important to self-regard, thus depriving someone of possessions or preventing them from having the means to acquire 'things' would create wounds that would affect self-regard negatively. Within his societal, environmental situation the newly independent African would be trying to acquire the things he desired but his means have been severely limited. He could be situated as feeling that he possessed a drastically reduced self-regard as *he* was personally being told the following things as he emerged into his own nationhood, consciously or unconsciously, because *he* was having to experience actual real situations in his society: "You will go without money", "You will go without food", "You will go without electric light", "You will go without work", "You will go without agency: *disabled!*". Surely he feels distinctly, psychically, egotistically *unloved?* Neglected, even unregarded.

Applying our distinction between sexual and ego-instincts, we must recognize that self-regard has a specially intimate dependence on narcissistic libido. Here we are supported by two fundamental facts: that in paraphrenics self-regard is increased, while in the transference neuroses it is diminished; and that in love-relations not being loved lowers the self-regarding feelings, while being loved raises them. As we have indicated, the aim and the satisfaction in a narcissistic object-choice is to be loved.

(Freud, 1914, p. 98)

Money is an "object-choice" and Fenichel (1938) states that money can be regarded as a supply of narcissism from the environment for the benefit of the ego's self-regard. In the process, despite his paper's basis upon anality, Fenichel provides valuable support for the usefulness of an orality hypothesis with his reference to the infant and food:

In so far as the drive to amass wealth appears to be a means of the ego for increasing self-regard, or for preventing a lowering of its level, this desire can be looked upon first as a derivative of that primitive form of regulation of self-regard in which the individual requires a 'narcissistic supply' from the environment in the same way as the

infant requires an external supply of food. Money is just such a supply.

(Fenichel, 1938, p. 78)

*Money can thus feed the ego for narcissistic reasons.*

The ego's narcissistic need for a self-preserving self-regard – to restore a status prior to castration, injury, and fracture – would be working hand in hand with the physical biological drive for self-preservation – prevention from starvation and death. It is a return to the infantile primal state of affairs whereby: “The sexual instincts are at the outset attached to the satisfaction of the ego-instincts” (Freud, 1914, p. 87).

In his ground-breaking ‘On Narcissism’ Freud (1914) set out what he describes as the “twofold existence” that individuals live in because of these two categories of instinct – sexual and ego – and thus two categories of libidinal energies: hunger (sexual) and love (ego).

There are various points in favour of the hypothesis of there having been from the first a separation between sexual instincts and others, ego-instincts, besides the serviceability of such a hypothesis in the analysis of the transference neuroses. I admit that this latter consideration alone would not be unambiguous, for it might be a question of an indifferent psychical energy which only becomes libido through the act of cathecting an object. But, in the first place, the distinction made in this concept corresponds to the common, popular distinction between hunger and love. In the second place, there are biological considerations in its favour. The individual does actually carry on a twofold existence: one to serve his own purposes and the other as a link in a chain, which he serves against his will, or at least involuntarily.

(Freud, 1914, p. 78)

The concept of ‘hunger’ (sexual) and, or versus, ‘love’ (ego) is met with frequently in relation to the maintenance of one's subjectivity and those of

others. For example, an African in an emerging independent nation during the 1960s was situated in what could be characterized as a Freudian “twofold existence” that simultaneously compelled and enabled him to look at himself and his society and to wonder about how he *felt* about himself and how he *felt* about these other groups and people. We break from our stipulated return to Freud’s classical theory-making to note that in a paper on the crises of ‘post-capitalism’, ‘Violence as a Response to Choice’, the Lacanian psychoanalyst Renata Salecl (2012) makes a necessary point that implies that the mirror in which an individual regards his self-regard via his ego is subject to major social transformations:

When societies experience radical changes, we can also observe a change in the way people start looking at themselves. It is as if the mirror in which they have been observing themselves has changed. And as a result people start looking at themselves in a different way.

(Salecl, 2012, p. 2278)

An example of how this changed mirrored subjectivity could operate would occur when, in particular ideological circumstances, some people could take themselves “as the ultimate master, we might become indifferent toward what others think about us and might also become indifferent to how our behaviour affects others” (Salecl, 2012, p. 2278). According to Freudian principles, an African man in 1960s Africa, whether an ordinary subject or occupying a senior or low-level post of influence and access, could be living a “twofold”, double existence and be asserting his resistance to being merely an involuntary “link in a chain” as he was hungry for certain things and he was in want of certain things.

For our purposes, the following question is the one that has to now be addressed: what is the status of subjectivity and agency, libidinal action, when one has a depleted ego, lowered self-regard? The psychic situation of an individual in a newly emerging African country of the 1960s is likely to be one where he is psychically castrated.



## 7. The Subject Castrated

If one characterizes the psychoanalytic tenet of castration (Freud, 1905) as being without, going without some 'thing' that one wants to have, it can be conjectured that the African man was symbolically castrated, removed from his desires by the European colonizing Other because he was left, during and after colonization, to go without what the European had enjoyed in terms of money, wealth, status, and standard of living. We have already noted in the previous sub-section on narcissism the relation between the depletion in narcissism of the ego, the wounds of the ego, and castration. Now, Freud writes on narcissism and castration that:

The disturbances to which a child's original narcissism is exposed, the reactions with which he seeks to protect himself from them and the paths into which he is forced in doing so – these are themes which I propose to leave on one side, as an important field of work which still awaits exploration. The most significant portion of it, however, can be singled out in the shape of the 'castration complex' (in boys, anxiety about the penis – in girls, envy for the penis) and treated in connection with the effect of early deterrence from sexual activity. Psycho-analytic research ordinarily enables us to trace the vicissitudes undergone by the libidinal instincts when these, isolated from the ego-instincts, are placed in opposition to them; but in the particular field of the castration complex, it allows us to infer the existence of an epoch and a psychical situation in which the two groups of instincts, still operating in unison and inseparably mingled, make their appearance as narcissistic interests.

(Freud, 1914, p. 92)

It is important to highlight what we regard as the crucial point that Freud ends with above by singling it out: it is the castration complex that allows for the consideration of *"the existence of an epoch and a psychical situation in which the two groups of instincts, still operating in unison and inseparably mingled, make their appearance as narcissistic interests"*. Therefore there exists an "epoch" when

two separate groups of instincts – ego and libidinal sexual – are joined and operate narcissistically. In the newly emergent, newly independent nations about to start fending for themselves, it would be feasible to make the assumption of a theoretical correlation: that is, that the societal and individual situations that would pertain would be akin to such an epoch coming into existence.

Further, during such a period of history, having been previously under colonial rule, there would be people within African nations such as Nigeria and other African countries who suffered from feelings of *'not having'*, that is, suffering from a conscious and unconscious castration that had prevented the attainment of desires and the maximization of pleasures and satisfaction. This thesis argues that their libidinal and ego-related energies, now joined together during the kind of “epoch” and “psychical situation” that Freud stipulates in the above citation, would have a single focus: *money*. Money to feed both physical needs and the ego’s narcissistic demands, and to operate under the pleasure-principle by warding off painful affects as Anna Freud (1936) suggested in our previous discussion on narcissism. It was in that discussion that Sigmund Freud brought forward the notion that a wounded, unloved ego *could* join narcissistic and sexual libidinal forces to seek out what would feed and satisfy both kinds of demands: self-regard and self-preservation.

Our argument that money as an object choice can serve the purpose of joined libidinal and narcissistic needs in specific situations of injury, wounding, and suffering can also be argued with support from another perspective. Although clearly not a paper written during the classical period (and thus breaking our remit that Freud could have made use of its theoretical contents), with the construction of the oral hypothesis there now seems to be justification to return to Peter Subkowski’s ‘On the Psychodynamics of Collecting’ (2006), an anality-based paper that we noted in *Chapter One*, in order to support the operating of an orality-linked mechanism with regard to the role that castration could play in collecting objects, which was given a strong oral overtone by him but was left unexpanded. Subkowski had pointed out that the castration complex was experienced in a variety of ways that called for restoration and repair.

This can elucidate the special proximity of collecting to the perversions in men. In the unconscious, the object of collection can represent the phallus for the man, or, at an earlier stage of development, the phallic, omnipotent and magically endowed breast-object, which could be lost and thus must be protected, hoarded and hidden because of its greater vulnerability.

(Subkowski, 2006, p. 386)

Thus, collecting is in relation to orality albeit via a potentially-to-be-castrated phallic symbolization to heighten and emphasize the breast's vulnerability as the store of what is being desired. One could think in both Freudian and Kleinian terms of the breast being the ultimate store of that most highly valued and highly desired warm milk. It should be remembered that the relation of collecting to anal erotism – on the plausible Freudian basis that the faeces in the “potty” are the infant's collection, its hoard of goods – was contested, and that Borneman (1976) and Fenichel (1938) were among the select few who chastised that *what* is collected is the important factor. A particular object, for example, money, could have nothing to do with anality. Bearing that in mind, it is to be noted that Subkowski states correctly that there always exists “a close and mostly unconscious relationship between the concrete object of collection and an individual's life history” and that: “The choice of object for collection, therefore, has great meaning in the analysis of a collector” (Subkowski, 2006, pp. 386-387). The Freudian ‘individual’ and his hostile impulses is our focus, and it could be considered that this “great meaning” that should be awarded to object-choice can be found via the necessary linkage that has to be made to the *past*, to *history*, to a particular epoch.

Money was a highly visible object of possession of Europeans in Africa during colonialism particularly through its purchasing power that was displayed in various forms, for example, in the quality of ‘European’ living standards. Narcissism demands that one must take care of one's ego. How would an African symbolically castrated during colonialism, removed from his ability to possess similar quantities of money, respond at national independence to acquiring the

money and wealth that the Europeans had enjoyed? With regard to narcissism and the object of collection, Subkowski asserts:

The unconscious aim here is to define and secure one's own 'ego' via concrete possessions, and to delineate oneself from others. By for instance collecting special objects, the collector equally defines himself as standing out and special. Objects of collection are here understood to be extensions of one's own self which help to maintain the illusion of narcissistic omnipotence.

(Subkowski, 2006, p. 387)

It is important to note that Subkowski speaks of the underlying factor as an "unconscious aim" in relation to securing and building the collector's ego. On the question of collecting money in a corrupt fashion – that is by secretly stealing money or by using other illegal practices to obtain money – a crucial area is this seeking to unconsciously secure, repair, or re-build a previously fractured or depleted ego. Or even the seeking to form an ego of one's own in the first place.

The colonized ego would be a wounded ego, a castrated ego, an *unloved* ego with acute narcissistic deficits. Here, Gendzier's tactful reminder should be noted regarding "oppression, in the colonial setting" and its two-way transformations impacting on "the psychology of both colonizer and colonized, affecting the self image of each and the relations of both. There is then no inherent oppressor or oppressed; it is the historical situation which makes him so" (Gendzier, 1976, p. 502). To which Fanon would respond that: "The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives' heads the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation and bestiality" (Fanon, 1961, p. 169), and that colonialism's cultural project had its own "kind of perverted logic" (Fanon, 1961, p. 169) that was designed to go even further *unconsciously*:

On the unconscious plane, colonialism therefore did not seek to be considered by the native as a gentle, loving mother who protects her child from a hostile environment, but rather as a mother who

unceasingly restrains her fundamentally perverse offspring from managing to commit suicide and from giving free rein to its evil instincts. The colonial mother protects her child from itself, from its ego, and from its physiology, its biology and its own unhappiness which is its very essence.

(Fanon, 1961, pp. 169-170)

For Young (1961, p. 495) “the aftermath of the past” means that “the new politics begin with the nation’s effort to recover intellectually and spiritually from the painful effects of colonialism, imitation and tradition.” It is in the individual situation that the previously colonized African finds himself during the 1960s in his society that is the focus of this investigation. The negative dialectics (Adorno, 1966) of the still suffering man who is about to face new kinds of tyrannical, ego-sapping behaviour from among his own people comes under the remit of the work carried out by the Frankfurt School theorists and we discuss this later in the second half of this chapter.

A characterization and understanding of an African who could be prone to commit an act of financial corruption as potentially feeling himself to be a suffering, *castrated* man in terms of access to money, wealth, and status and seeking to remedy that situation and to restore himself in his own eyes and in the eyes of other people is useful here. It serves to illuminate the place of money within the psyche of the African living in a newly decolonised country at the birth of nationhood. With respect to the wider definition of money as food, it would *all* be food because it was *all* joined together biologically and psychically as *food*, feeding both the mind and the body simultaneously and spontaneously. The means for acquiring both physical and psychic primary satisfactions and pleasures would come from one sole source: access to, getting, and having money, and feeding oneself with it in all manner of ways:

The facts that the retinue of politician or District Head must resemble those of an oriental potentate; that the graduate on his first job must possess a motor car that his counterpart in Britain might aspire to on retirement; that the labourer must possess a wrist watch and a

fountain pen – with every intermediate gradation among the classes – these represent financial burdens which were appropriate, *mutatis mutandis*, to a society which did not have to live on cash salaries, but which in modern West Africa lead many to corruption

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, pp. 40-41)

It seems that when money *is* accessed and available for spending then letting other people know that *you* have it and *they* do not was also important. The *holder* of money – the possible equivalent of the anal theory's hoarder of possessions – is in possession of something that he and other people both crave and it seems that they have to be made very much aware of that. Could this be an effort *to* castrate by somebody who had been previously castrated and is attempting to repair his ego? Without other people knowing and seeing that one is in possession of money, or that one is making substantial money and spending it freely, even recklessly, how valuable is that possession of money, is that ability to make and to have money to repair the harm done by castration? For Fenichel, the type of attitudinal responses that Wraith and Simpkins gave examples of above, can be even further drawn *psychoanalytically*:

The varieties of irrational attitudes towards money, arising from unsolved anal-erotic conflicts, have been so aptly portrayed by Freud, Jones, and Abraham in the classical descriptions of the anal character, that nothing can be added, except a reminder that not only the unconscious attitude towards faeces but also the attitude towards introjections of every kind can be projected on to money. One thinks of kleptomaniacs, or of the women who drain men of their resources, to whom money, which they are always striving to take away symbolizes a whole series of introjected objects that have been withheld from them; or of depressive characters who from fear of starvation regard money as potential food. There are too those men to whom money signifies their potency, who experience any loss of money as a castration, or who are inclined, when in danger, to sacrifice money in a sort of 'prophylactic self-castration'.

(Fenichel, 1938, pp. 83-84)

The attempt has been made to illustrate in the previous chapter and this one, that the apt examples that Fenichel provides above can equally be attributed and

sourced to orality and oral-erotic and oral-sadistic conflicts. For example, Fenichel argues in the citation that “the attitude towards introjections of every kind can be projected on to money” (Fenichel, 1938, p. 83), a statement that implicitly acknowledges *orality* because of orality’s central role in introjection and incorporation, as discussed in *Chapter Four*. Further, with regard to ‘the anal character’ and his having fear of starvation, such an idea would seem rather incongruous were it not for the notion of a potential desire to hoard food. This would be connected to the exclusivity of the infant’s relationship with its mother and its desire for something that the mother has or has access to that the infant feels he or she is not receiving. And desire for what the mother desires that the infant cannot attain. Financial corruption can be connected to desiring, wanting, loving, collecting and hoarding money. Squirreling, hiding money away in foreign bank accounts is a very good instance of this kind of money hoarding. However, with the involvement of the concept of orality and an oral hypothesis more headway can be made in understanding the mental processes taking place.

Let us connect the above to the self-regard of the putative individual who *might* commit an act of financial corruption at the dawn of the entering into nationhood of his newly independent country during the 1960s. What it seems can be stated at this junction follows upon our attempt to outline and to clarify how the feelings of psychic castration and narcissistic depletion of the ego could impact on an individual in particular social and historical circumstances, in this instance following the period of colonialism. It seems that one can argue with justification and psychoanalytic theoretical support that an individual who does ‘not have’, an individual who is having to go without things that he desires, *could* make strong efforts to repair those feelings narcissistically in order to replenish or reconstruct the depleted or fractured ego. He *could perhaps* commit an act of financial corruption in order to repair his colonially castrated, wounded ego with a supply of money as narcissistic food from the environment for his ego.

The Freudian psychoanalytic theories of castration and narcissism taken together and utilized together in this particular historical and social context make considerable progress towards a psychoanalytic understanding of how an individual could be situated psychically and what could make an individual start

thinking of acts of financial corruption, given the contexts of the kind of society that he lived in. There is some further probing to be done about the nature of his impoverished country undergoing tremendous political and social transformations. There are questions to be discussed about the individual's social environment and his psychological attitudes and behaviour, because the poverty in African countries during the 1960s represented a particular kind of poverty in which extraordinary extremes between the rich and the poor could be observed side by side.

## **PART TWO: A PARTICULAR KIND OF POVERTY**

### **8. A Particular Kind Of Poverty**

Here we will go on to trace the emergence of corruption in Africa in the public spotlight during the 1960s and to engage with the narratives and discourses that enabled that emergence. We will be looking to the potential contributions that psychoanalysis could bring to that discourse. Here were the newly independent countries about to be ridden, it seemed, or already ridden with corrupt acts and practices and, at the same time, here was an emerging academic discipline, 'corruption' (rooted in Western cultures that had historical and contemporary experiences of various types of corruption), finding itself with a new arena in which to launch new investigations into the age-old question: What is the nature of man and the nature of the society he is to create? How is man influenced by his external environmental pressures, including peer and group pressures? In *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* Freud sums up this problematic by reflecting upon man's need to construct an ego ideal based upon other members of humanity:

Each individual is a component part of numerous groups, he is bound by ties of identification in many directions, and he has built up his ego ideal upon the most various models. Each individual therefore has a share in numerous group minds – those of his race, of his class, of his creed, of his nationality, etc. – and he can also raise himself above them to the extent of having a scrap of independence and originality.



(Freud, 1921, p. 129)

Let us proceed from Freud's psychoanalytic eye to the writers on the African ground during the 1960s, such as Wraith and Simpkins, in order to provide the expressive painting on a large canvass of the acutely contrasting, often fractured, often simultaneously layered, details of the existences of many individuals and groups during this epoch. This section is named 'A Particular Kind of Poverty' but what *was* the particular kind, or indeed *kinds*, of poverty in which they lived during the 1960s?

A characteristic feature of developing countries, in comparison with the more developed world, is that they are having to live in several centuries simultaneously. There are admittedly great extremes of wealth in Britain, great differences in education, and, perhaps greatest of all, differences in culture and styles of living. It is doubtful, however, whether any of these differences are as fundamental as those between the huge mass of family farmers, living very like the English peasant of the middle ages, illiterate, superstitious, handling very little money, their world bounded by the family or clan; the wage-earners and urban proletariat, living like their counterparts in nineteenth century Britain, semi-literate, underpaid, badly housed, but beginning to understand their rights and to feel their power; the growing middle class of traders, teachers and officials, whose styles and standards of living approximate to those of the privileged classes of the twentieth century; and the top professional and business men, whose material and often professional standards equal or exceed those of the western world. It is metaphorically possible in many parts of Africa to span the centuries in the course of a short walk.

(Wraith & Simpkins, 1963, pp. 196-197)

Young (1961) argues that the efforts to develop and modernize can create new forms of chaos and disruptions that are deeply destabilizing. Psychoanalytically one could argue that in such instances it could be possible to consider the nation as possessing a *societal* ego that has been fractured by colonialism in much the same manner that one can consider an individual's ego as having disintegrated.

The pressures on society in the new nations – within and between groups, economic interests, and different generations – are effectively drawn by Young.

Unfortunately, most of the new states cannot start off as cohesive, homogeneous societies in which some popular consensus is feasible, because they are ripped up by so many centrifugal forces – racial, ethnic, linguistic, regional, tribal and economic. All the energy and resourcefulness of the political leadership must often concentrate just on keeping the nation from disintegrating. The processes of modernization add new social strains to the old. Traditional and modern groups clash. The feudal, landed interests in the old countryside oppose the new economic interests of the city. Old-guard officials resent the influx of young administrators and technicians. The professional elite are torn from their cultural past and removed from the people, disoriented to an extent Westerners seldom realize. Corruption and nepotism rot good intentions and retard progressive policies.

(Young, 1961, p. 498)

Psychoanalytically, is it not possible that these societal pressures and tensions are emanating from conflicted *states of mind*?

## **9. Society and the Individual.**

Social theorists such as those belonging to the Frankfurt School, with their understanding of classical Freudian psychoanalysis, bring much to this discussion of fractured societal states that are being further disintegrated under ideological and economic pressures. On continental Europe during this same period these intellectual figures from non-psychoanalytic fields were raising critical issues concerning man's innate needs and behaviour and the confrontation with structures such as capitalism and communism. It is useful to briefly mention the Frankfurt School and their contribution to the debate on the ideological versus the instinctual-biological, bearing in mind the debate that it was also considered by critics such as Jameson not to be *theoretical* enough in psychoanalytic terms.

Concerns about man's dialectical relations with society informed the output of the sociologists and philosophers at the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, and they, too, were Freudian-inspired: Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse, among others, took into account Freud's influence within their critical theory and critical philosophy. The Frankfurt School sociologists and philosophers established themselves in the 1930s and post-World War Two world of the left as the premier radical leftists disillusioned about the possibilities of the individual's power and ability to assert a liberating agency in opposition to and in confrontation with authoritarian or oppressive state structures.

While capitalism's advocates clearly recognized and to a large extent approved of an individual's 'love of money' as an entrepreneurial stimulus and a necessity for the prosperous functioning of a capitalist economy, the Frankfurt School's Max Horkheimer was concerned with how the individual conceptualized himself and navigated himself in such capitalistic structures where the allure of money positioned itself as a "paradise" (Horkheimer, 1957). The theorists' engagement with Freud was sophisticated and genuine: from Marcuse's lectures and inquiries into Freud (e.g. Marcuse, 1969) and work on utopian idealism and the impacts of externally imposed change; to Adorno's philosophy of and critique of the suffering man, the 'negative dynamics' of damaged man (Adorno, 1966). Whilst the following questions arise 'Where does his suffering come from? How does he experience it? How does he express his reaction to suffering?', the Frankfurt School's focus of questioning centres on this: 'What happens to man's being and conception of himself when utopia appears to be forever out of reach?'

However, the School's work was controversial and open to important criticisms. An example of criticisms that are relevant to this thesis is made by the Yale university academic, Fredric Jameson, who is no fan of the Frankfurt School's output on what he terms "late capitalism" and their usage of "the synthesis of Marx and Freud". He finds jarring their attempts at the application of psychoanalysis in the form of "drive, repressive mechanism, and anxiety" (Jameson, 1982, p. 344) to their analyses of history, culture and society. But he admits that he has to acknowledge that:

What remains powerful in this part of their work, however, is a more global model of repression which, borrowed from psychoanalysis, provides the underpinnings for their sociological vision of the total system or “verwaltete Welt” (the bureaucratically “administered” world system) of late capitalism.

(Jameson, 1982, p. 345)

Jameson blames what he describes as the awkwardness of the Frankfurt School’s psychological explanations of society on the allegedly small radius of their psychoanalytic focus: they are not theoretical enough, it seems:

The adaptation of clinical Freudianism proves awkward at best precisely because the fundamental psychoanalytic inspiration of the Frankfurt School derives, not from diagnostic texts, but rather from *Civilization and Its Discontents*, with its eschatological vision of an irreversible link between development (or “Kultur” in the classical German sense of the word as technological and bureaucratic “progress”) and ever-increasing instinctual renunciation and misery.

(Jameson, 1982, p. 345)

Jameson’s charge regarding the alleged lack of scrutiny of “diagnostic texts” and failure to base claims, assumptions, and suppositions on *theoretical* grounds is of concern and of relevance as it chimes with the rationale underlying the decision made at the start of the work of this thesis: to endeavour to root its premises and arguments in selected, relevant, key Freudian classical psychoanalytic theoretical fundamentals and principles, and thus also allowing an engagement with clinical factors where necessary.

Richard Lichtman’s book *The Production of Desire* is pertinent to the critique of the way societies struggle to find possible solutions or compromises between the demands of ideology and the needs of individual subjectivities. His work is deserving of attention as it progresses further the ideas of the Frankfurt School theorists on the critical relationship between the work of Karl Marx on wealth,

capital accumulation, and the nation state and that of Freud on the unconscious motivations and psychic energies, repressed and unrepressed, of the human species. With regard to individual desires versus ideological pressures, Lichtman makes the point that:

Marx no more denied the existence of individuals than Freud denied the existence of society. The question for him was the origin and the status of individuality. Individuals make history only insofar as they intersect with historical forces that are fundamentally beyond their personal control. Marx was concerned with individual persons in the mode of their *interpersonal* contact and as the manifestations of social forces. ... For Marx, as opposed to Freud, individuals are derivatives of the social system rather than primary elements from which the system is itself constructed.

(Lichtman, 1982, p. 7)

Man *is* because man *becomes* through his labour, is one potential summary of Karl Marx's view of who man, objectified and alienated, is. Man is a producer, but man is also a product: man produces himself as a product. Man is a product of organic social transformations, but man is also producing those social transformations. He is responsible for what he produces: society and himself, society and the individual. Out of those social transformations come new social relations, new societies, new social realities. Both Marx and Freud placed crucial importance on human developmental stages, phases, and epochs. But for Marx these developmental stages occur in the context of how the world and its nations move from historical period to historical period and the consequences for human beings in being part of and subject to such historically determined movements of world history. For Freud it is the psychological developmental stages of childhood which he theorizes and casts as determining not only the later adult character and psychical behaviour, but in addition, the pattern of the regressive nature of an adult's symptomatological structuring during pathogenic illnesses. Society changes but, crucially, how much does, has, *individual man*, collected into a group, changed psychically? Despite Lichtman's assertion above, Marx seems to have left a gap in thinking that the (natural?) historical progress of transitional

class positions was *the* major factor and covered all gaps and pitfalls, including perhaps even psychological, *intrapersonal*, ones. Lichtman has to take this criticism on board:

Marx had paid insufficient attention to the mediating institutions through which the mode of economic production and the mode of human production were joined. The family, in particular, was viewed more as a “reflection” of social relations of production than as a training ground in human pathology. Freud focused on this institution as the source of human stultification

(Lichtman, 1982, p. 11)

Freud took into account the psychical developmental changes in the individual and the collective brought about by social transformations. One could state that Freud is *all* about such psychical changes and developments in the individual and the group. Lichtman writes that: “Both Freud and Marx severely limit the credibility that can be assigned to the ‘rational’ accounts that men and women provide of their own activity” and both “regard men and women as driven by forces they do not comprehend and cannot control” (Lichtman, 1982, p. 20). For Freud man is a product of his unconscious instinctual impulses, drives, and phantasies. However, this could be yet another transitional stage towards the Marxist classless society, as opposed to being the end of historical development without the production of a “human” classless society. Freud studiously, as this thesis argues, tried to ignore the impact of money, and given that his field was psychoanalysis, there was a particular avoidance of the psychical impact of the *lack* of money on human behaviour. But access to money and the accumulation of money *are* critical factors in life. Money as a constructed *object of satisfaction*. Constructed by man for his *enjoyment* and *pleasure* and an object of satisfaction without which man is forever pitted against man.

Money, since it has the property of being able to buy anything, and to appropriate all objects to itself, is thus the object *par excellence*. It is

the universal character of this property that creates the omnipotence of money; this is the reason for its being regarded as an almighty being ... money is the pander between need and its object, between man's life and his means of subsistence. But what mediates my life also mediates the existence of other men for me, it is for me the other person.

(Marx, 1844, p. 179)

Marx was trying to grapple with what can now be acknowledged as being psychoanalytic concepts before they were thus known, for example "money is the pander between need and its object" in the above citation; whilst at the same time considering the object alienated and itself objectified by money's elusive and overwhelming power of valuation and purchase. Other fundamental tenets of economic theory such as Keynes's 'animal spirits' and Adam Smith's the 'invisible hand' can also be put forward as sharing the same conceptual field as psychoanalysis, although clearly, as explored in *Chapter One* with regard to Keynes's relation to Freud's writings on anality, it is simply that psychoanalytic terminology was not used; and in Adam Smith's era it had yet to emerge.

Marx saw human beings as the manifestations of social class forces. But if we grasp the external world of capitalism as alienated, brutal, and pathologically weighted with the burden of its own constricted energy, how can we avoid attributing these characteristics to the men and women who are reproduced through this system and who reproduce it in turn? Freud provided the prism through which the destructiveness of the bourgeois world could be viewed in the spectrum of its individual malignancy.

(Lichtman, 1982, p. 12)

We would suggest that Freud exposed the potential destructiveness in the relationship between what we do and what we want in our *material* lives and what we do and want in our *psychic* existence. Lichtman notes that, "Marxism understood the irrationality, wastefulness, violence and self-destruction of the external social system. Freud promised an understanding of how this process

had become deeply rooted in the psyche of men and women” (Lichtman, 1982, p. 10). Instinct and desire can be directly linked with Marx and Freud as, “From Freud we can derive an understanding of how the process noted in Marx’s account is reproduced internally in the psyche of the labourer”, whilst within Marx’s work “we acquire illumination about the social circumstances around which the renunciation of instinctual desire is originally created” (Lichtman, 1982, p. 28).

What people take themselves to be doing, the reasons they assign to their own activity, is no more than the surface manifestations of underlying forces of which the purported “agents” are almost wholly unaware. Ordinary consciousness is revelatory, but not to the “actors” who are consciously the subjects of their own experience. Human existence can only be grasped from the vantage point of a theory at odds with the conceptions that people commonly entertain. This shared comprehension of the illusion of rational consciousness is one of the fundamental propositions that unite the work of Marx and Freud, and is perhaps the basic ground for the view that finds them ultimately compatible.

(Lichtman, 1982, p. 20)

Underscoring the writings on wealth by the masters of economic thought – from the right to the left of the ideological spectrum – are the notions of unconscious motives and the *driving* force of psychic energies. Psychic *drives*. This thesis is making the argument, with a foundation based on psychoanalytic theory, that what is missing from analyses of money and people’s relationships with money, is psychoanalysis: particularly the unconscious desires of people and how such unconscious desires would manifest themselves in certain situations and certain periods of time. The recurring question of what is the relation between the self-preservation instincts/drives and Marx’s the “means of subsistence”, as cited above, leads to the observation that, arguably, money is the connection. In respect of this point it would be important to state again one of the main arguments that this thesis makes: that the buying and the greed that appear to be characteristic of newly independent or newly emergent or transitional



societies could be expressions of an instinct that was not previously given sufficient, or any, outlet for discharge.

If an individual is forced to the sudden realization that they cannot have 'that thing', an object of their desire or their need, on the basis that they do not have money, what then becomes of their relationship to money? The 'thing' that is desired becomes unattainable and thus one does not have, one lacks, and one is left desiring and dissatisfied. One cannot have because one does not have money, so that even if one professes to despise money or to dismiss it as an irrelevance or as a material thing unworthy of consideration, as despicable, money wields its own revenge with its power over the satisfaction of desire and need. Money enters into a metaphoric, symbolic, existential relationship with desire. Moreover, what if others have and you do not have?

There was a lack of recognition for the possibility that people from the working class, 'ordinary' working people, might themselves be inclined towards money and wealth accumulation, and that this was not just a characteristic – or should one say a property – of the bourgeoisie alone. One could argue that the process of class structuring that Marx described as historical developmental is still continuing in that the transition to a classless society could still be taking place, but that what was not predicted was that the proletariat would want to take the place of the bourgeoisie and want what the bourgeoisie had previously possessed. As has happened in Russia and Eastern Europe, and as is taking place in present-day China, it would seem that *working class people wanted to be middle class* and to *desire*, buy and possess the things associated with belonging to such a class. And, if need be, to obtain these objects as a result of acts of corruption.

Gordon White (1996) outlines in his paper, 'Corruption and the Transition from Socialism in China', that in China during the late 1980s and the 1990s it was "widely recognized that corruption extends well beyond the politico-bureaucratic apparatus proper, to include professionals such as doctors and accountants, and petty functionaries such as bank-tellers, ticket-sellers, and shop assistants" (White, 1996, p.151). Further, "the range of phenomena included

varies enormously” (White, 1996, p.152). But there was still a deep lack of clarity about what corruption entailed despite the fact that “the vague notion of abuse of some form of institutional power for private ends underlies all perceptions” (White, 1996, p. 152).

Gordon White’s comment written in 1996 regarding the “vague notion” of corruption is an opportune point at which to now turn to two papers on corruption, written three decades earlier during the historical period under discussion, that will allow for an in-depth psychoanalytic focus on financial corruption during the 1960s in Africa.

### **10. Corruption in a New State: Colin Leys and David Bayley.**

It would be worthwhile at this junction to consolidate some of the factors that we have been discussing regarding the structuring of conscious and unconscious thoughts about money, wealth, and the acquiring of wealth by asking again the question that was put forward in *Chapter One* on the motivations of someone either intent on committing or ambivalent about committing an act of financial corruption: What is at work psychoanalytically when a bureaucrat or a politician or a businessman in an “emerging”, “developing” country is confronted with the sudden availability of a huge amount of money? We now have a clearer idea of what could be at the root of his desire for that money following our discussions of the conscious and unconscious processes that are taking place, particularly narcissistic deficits, lack of self-regard, and the perceived necessity of feeding the ego with our widened definition of food. We have the oral hypothesis and, thus, we can now also make the assumption based on the oral hypothesis that the urge that he is attempting to satisfy is an oral drive for money that has been unrepressed in his newly emerging independent nation. We have tried to establish that his unconscious relationship to the thought of such a large sum of money is complex but is essentially based on his libidinal needs – sexual and ego (hunger and love) – joined together to find the object called money that will satisfy both force-filled demands: physiological and narcissistic. Libidinal forces are prevailing upon him to commit what amounts to an act of aggression.

The papers we now turn to in order to probe even deeper into the above areas are Colin Leys's 'What is the Problem about Corruption?' (1965), and David Bayley's 'The Effects of Corruption in a Developing Nation' (1966). There is still a need to understand the processes of corruption during the historical period that is being studied, that is, the 1960s, and these two papers provide the opportunity to conduct that analytic examination. The detailed extracts from them should be viewed as a form of narrative accounting.

Let us start with an overview of the papers. In section 8 of this chapter, we discussed the particular kind, or particular kinds, of extremes of poverty extant in many African countries following their independence during the 1960s. Leys affirms this notion because he argues that corruption and inequality, corruption and deep levels of poverty, do not merely coincide, they are tied together:

The incentive to corrupt whatever official purposes public institutions are agreed to have is especially great in conditions of extreme inequality and considerable absolute poverty. The benefits of holding an office—any office—are relatively enormous; by comparison the penalties for attempting to obtain one by bribery are fairly modest, in relation to the low standard of living of the would-be office holder, or in relation to the pressure of relatives' claims on his existing standard of living. Generally, corruption seems likely to be inseparable from great inequality.

(Leys, 1965, p. 225)

It is through Leys's eyes that one begins to see clearly how deeply endemic corruption *could* become, *was* likely to become, in the future, as he predicts the weak spots in the governing elites' patterns of behaviour that are challenged by the scarce and desirable commodities and the monies that the state could bestow: "Neither politicians nor civil servants are usually drawn from a class brought up for public service from an early age, or insulated from corrupting pressures by the established aloofness of a mandarin class" (Leys, 1965, p. 225). Thus:

to the extent that the official public morality of a society is more or less systematically subverted, especially if the leadership is involved in it, it becomes useless as a tool for getting things done, and this is expensive in any society where other resources are scarce. What is involved here is the idea of a 'corrupted society'.

(Leys, 1965, p. 228)

Further, his paper allows a discussion of corruption that brings in notions of the possible manifestations of a superego (or superegos) at work through the state's "sacrosanct", "perplexing" institutions and laws, and complex, complicated and "alien" regulations that could be regarded as a foreign, imposed superego demanding obedience:

The idea of the national interest is weak because the idea of a nation is new. And the institutions and offices of the state are, for most people, remote and perplexing. Even to the civil servants and politicians directly involved in them they are new; they are aware of the 'official purposes' which are attached to them by importation, but they scarcely regard them as 'hallowed' and hence they do not necessarily regard them as sacrosanct. On the contrary their western origin makes them suspect. To many people the 'state' and its organs were identified with alien rule and were proper objects of plunder, and they have not yet been re-identified fully as instruments for the promotion of common interests. Meanwhile to the illiterate peasant the 'state' and its organs continue to be the source of a web of largely unknowable and complicated regulations, and hence of a permanent threat of punishment; against this threat it is very reasonable to take any available precaution, such as offering bribes.

(Leys, 1965, pp. 224-225)

Morality and the imposition of a national moral code of behaviour that is allied with "the promotion of common interests" could be related to the function of a superego, in particular that of a 'national superego'. Leys states that public morality and private morality are intimately connected but, critically, he makes

the observation that both are endangered by being “weakened by the hammer blows delivered to all moral rules by rapid social and economic change” (Leys, 1965, p. 225). The “permanent threat of punishment”, cited above, emanating from the institutions of the state and the “largely unknowable and complicated” laws of the land could, psychoanalytically, echo the moralistic laws – often equally unknowable and complicated – of the reprimanding, censoring, psychic superego father-figure or god-like substitutive agent.

Both papers challenge the dominant perspective that corruption is a ‘bad’ thing, but it is David Bayley who truly takes up this mantle. His paper is of critical importance because of its direct and determined focus on what he calls the “*both* positive and negative” (Bayley, 1966, p. 719, his emphasis) effects of corruption. His stated purpose is “to show that corruption in developing nations is not necessarily antipathetic to the development of modern economic and social systems; that corruption serves in part at least a beneficial function in developing societies” (Bayley, 1966, p. 719). This was not an observation that could generally be extracted from most writers at the time with reference to Africa, thus Bayley’s paper is also important because he thus complements and serves to bring an alternative perspective to the events being observed by writers in Africa during the same epoch. He is to be commended for his attempt to frame hypotheses on the possible *positive future* effects of corruption. His text’s attempt to construct a positive critique of acts of corruption that extends to all emerging states is in contrast to the generally prevailing tone of condemnation, moralistic negativity, and lukewarm hopes that corruption would be a passing phase of growing-pains behaviour, as typified by Wraith and Simpkins’s book on African corruption, to which Bayley also refers.

Moreover, illustrations are provided from Bayley’s experiences in India and they serve to support the general observation made by writers on corruption during this period, (such as Colin Leys), that acts of corruption were taking place in *all* the emerging nation states not just in the new African nations. As Bayley notes correctly about the material that he uses to illustrate some points: “I am sure, however, that the Indian situation is not atypical” (Bayley, 1966, pp. 719-720). In fact the close international alliances struck during this period by the new nations

emerging globally in the so-called 'Third World' (for example, such as the Non-Aligned Movement) only serves to strengthen this observation. An example of these interconnections is highlighted thus:

The hero of the African novel, *No Longer at Ease*, which portrays the tension between the demands of traditional society and standards of a Western civil service, finally capitulates to the pressures upon him and accepts gratuities but salves his conscience with the thought that he only takes money from those whom he approves on their merits anyhow. A variation of this is the civil servant who takes money from all applicants impartially but still goes ahead and decides the matter on merits. Rumour in India would have it that this is not an exceptional situation. Are such people corrupt?

(Bayley, 1966, p. 720)

To Bayley's question: "Are such people corrupt?" can be posited the question: What, then is corruption? Leys responded by questioning why only certain writers he describes as moralists (and he cites Wraith and Simpkins) have approached this question:

This is curious when one considers the word itself (corruption=to change from good to bad; to debase; to pervert); it denotes patterns of action which derive their significance from the role of value-systems in social behaviour. Similar phenomena, such as suicide, crime, or religious fanaticism, have intrigued sociologists greatly. However, the question of corruption in the contemporary world has so far been taken up almost solely by moralists.

(Leys, 1965, p. 216)

Leys stipulates that for something to be called "corrupt" there has to be in existence a "rule" together with "the sense in which it is said to have been perverted" (Leys, 1965, p. 221). But he questions: "Who regards the purpose which is being perverted as the proper or 'official' purpose? It may be so regarded by most people in the society, including those who pervert it; or it may

be so regarded by only a few people” (Leys, 1965, p. 221-222). Leys’s fundamental question is framed in the following manner:

Under what circumstances are actions called corrupt? What is at issue ... is the existence of a standard of behaviour according to which the action in question breaks some rule, written or unwritten, about the proper purposes to which a public office or a public institution may be put. The moralist has his own idea of what the rule should be. The actors in the situations concerned have theirs. It may be the same as the moralists' (they may regard themselves as corrupt); or quite different (they may regard themselves as behaving honourably according to their standards, and regard their critics' standards as irrelevant); or they may be 'men of two worlds', partly adhering to two standards which are incompatible, and ending up exasperated and indifferent (they may recognise no particular moral implications of the acts in question at all—this is fairly obviously quite common). And in addition to the actors there are the other members—more or less directly affected—of their own society; all these positions are possible for them too.

(Leys, 1965, p. 221)

Of particular note in the above citation is how “men of two worlds” echoes, unknowingly, Freud’s psychoanalytic perspective of living in two worlds – “The individual does actually carry on a twofold existence: one to serve his own purposes and the other as a link in a chain, which he serves against his will, or at least involuntarily” (Freud, 1914, p. 78) – *and* echoes the basic psychoanalytic dualism between conscious and unconscious states of mind. A state of being that Leys, importantly, acknowledges as being not only part of the individual’s character but also forming that of his fellow members of society.

Bayley comments that the results of corrupt practices by those lower down the social ladder can be of considerable monetary value:

It should also be noted that although corruption at the top attracts the most attention in public forums, and involves the largest amount of money in separate transactions, corruption at the very bottom

levels is the more apparent and obvious and in total amounts of money involved may very well rival corruption at the top.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 724)

For David Bayley 'corruption' and 'bribery' are linked: "Corruption, then, while being tied particularly to the act of bribery, is a general term covering misuse of authority as a result of considerations of personal gain, which need not be monetary", and, "A bribe is then defined as 'a price, reward, gift or favour bestowed or promised with a view to pervert the judgment or corrupt the conduct especially of a person in a position of trust'" (Bayley, 1966, p. 720). Leys, as cited above, spoke of a "rule" that was "perverted" in his elaboration of the term 'corruption' and now Bayley uses "to pervert" in relation to a sense of corroding someone's judgement. It is interesting that both writers have chosen to use this term, 'pervert', as a characterizing factor in acts of corruption. For Bayley, in its essence the committing of an act of corruption means: "(a) a decision to depart from government-established criteria for decisions of the relevant class and (b) a monetary reward benefiting either the official directly or those related to him" (Bayley, 1966, p. 724). In this succinct elaboration of the essentials of an act of corruption Bayley uses the phrase "to depart from". *Psychoanalytically* this would suggest that a new direction, a new aim has come into being and has been set in the mind of the individual as an alternative to the original, pre-destined aim set by the government authorities.

Leys (1965, p. 223) asks what he correctly describes as a "central" question: "In any society, under what conditions is behaviour most likely to occur which a significant section of the population will regard as corrupt?" Leys's forward-thinking and freshness is clear in the framing of the question to include the use of the phrase "in any society", to which could be added 'at a particular time' to make it even more timely and relevant. Complex and of concern with regard to people's "attitudes" is: "The extent to which action which perverts or contravenes such official purposes is seen as doing so" (Leys, 1965, p. 223).



Bayley sets out a good listing of the typical areas in which the urge to commit an act of corruption might be awakened or provoked in an individual:

Corruption comes in innumerable shapes, forms, and sizes. There are as many reasons for corrupting as there are ways in which government affects individuals; there are as many avenues for corruption as there are roles to be played in government. Corruption may be involved in the issuance of export licenses, a decision to investigate in a criminal case, obtaining of a copy of court proceedings, appointment of candidates to universities, choice of men for civil service jobs, inspection of building specifications in new housing developments, avoiding of arrest by people with defective motor vehicles, granting of contracts, and in the expediting of anything.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 724)

It should be remembered that an act of corruption can be initiated in the mind of the individual *himself*. There is no necessity for the presence of what Bayley calls “the corruptor” (1966, p. 724) in his listing of the “three classes of mediating actors: the corrupted, the corruptor, and the non-participating audience,” although such a person is of necessity in the extremely frequent incidences of bribery. The corruptor’s tempting hand may also be present in the other highly typical form of corrupt practice: the “kickback”, that is, the monetary slicing off of a percentage from the total sum of an official contract: “a civil servant may let a contract for a certain sum, but get 10 per cent back for the favour of giving the contract: 90 per cent of the allocated amount goes for the public purpose, 10 per cent goes into personal gains” (Bayley, 1966, p. 725). The important point is made with respect to the type of atmosphere created by acts of corruption, that corruption itself creates a *corrupting* atmosphere that “feeds” on and eats up itself and its surroundings:

Corruption exerts a corrupting influence on other members of the administrative apparatus. This is a function of its persistence, its perceived rewards, and the impunity with which it is done. Corruption

feeds upon itself and erodes the courage necessary to adhere to high standards of propriety. Morale declines, each man asking himself why he should be the sole custodian of morality.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 725)

### **11. Imposing a 'National' Superego**

We must return to our dialogue with Freud's theory-making in order for him to establish the premise of his concept of the superego, which will then enable us to enquire whether, in such a potentially corrosive, 'feeding' atmosphere of corrupt acts, the possibility of a superego that could be considered as a 'national' superego could be constructed and have any agency. On the individual superego Freud states that:

The superego owes its special position in the ego, or in relation to the ego, to a factor which must be considered from two sides: on the one hand it was the first identification and one which took place while the ego was still feeble, and on the other hand it is the heir to the Oedipus complex and has thus introduced the most momentous objects into the ego. The superego's relation to the later alterations of the ego is roughly similar to that of the primary sexual phase of childhood to later sexual life after puberty. Although it is accessible to all later influences, it nevertheless preserves throughout life the character given to it by its derivation from the father-complex – namely, the capacity to stand apart from the ego and to master it. It is a memorial of the former weakness and dependence of the ego, and the mature ego remains subject to its domination. As the child was once under a compulsion to obey its parents, so the ego submits to the categorical imperative of its superego.

(Freud, 1923, p. 48)

Psychoanalytically, therefore, the superego represents, constitutes, the prohibiting, often punishing, law-giver; the conscience that sets the rules and demands adherence and obedience. The superego's ability to reach and maintain a level of severe criticism that amounts to persecution can turn into a great source of misery for the individual. It is the censoring agency constructed to

form an exterior and interior conscience (and an interior guilt), brought together and framed as the literal overseer of the ego. Freud's delineation of the superego's function then turns to its archaeological formation from the egos and the ids of historical past ancestors. The id is, of course, for Freud – in his 1923 structural determination of the mind's agencies as ego, id, and superego – the psychical entity that behaves *unconsciously*, is unknown, and subject to the instincts, passions, and the pleasure principle (Freud, 1923, pp. 23-25).

But the derivation of the superego from the first object-cathexes of the id, from the Oedipus complex, signifies even more for it. This derivation ... brings it into relation with the phylogenetic acquisitions of the id and makes it a reincarnation of former ego-structures which have left their precipitates behind in the id. Thus the superego is always close to the id and can act as its representative *vis-à-vis* the ego. It reaches deep down into the id and for that reason is farther from consciousness than the ego is.

(Freud , 1923, pp. 48-49)

It would be possible to extract from Freud's principles with regard to the individual's superego in order to enable comparable elements to potentially constitute what would be in effect a 'national' superego. One would be proceeding from the smallest unit of a group (the individual) to its largest extrapolation (the nation). There would certainly be a requirement for Bayley's "high standards of propriety", "custodian of morality" (1966, p. 725) from those considered to be leaders and 'founding fathers' of the nation, but whether that would be enough is uncertain. What would be the national (superego's) attitude to the transgression of the committing of an act of corruption? Colin Leys addresses how an individual could be torn between the morals of western countries and African moralities:

there is likely to be much behaviour in new states that will be called corrupt. It is not to say anything about the 'level' of morality of the citizens of these countries. It is only to say that, poised as they are

between the inherited public morality of the western nation-state and the disappearing public morality of the tribe, they are subject to very considerable cross-pressures which make it unlikely that the western state morality, at least in its refined and detailed forms, will emerge as the new public morality of these countries; meantime, however, the criteria of the west have sufficient standing in some quarters to ensure that the accusation of corruption is freely leveled against all behaviour which does not conform to them.

(Leys, 1965, p. 226)

What Leys terms “the *inherited* public morality of the western nation-state” (emphasis added) in Africa is strongly suggestive of the imposition of a foreign, alien, moral code. He is not speaking of an African inheritance in an African country of the residual structures of past public moralities and conduct, but of inheritances that have been imported. The newly imported moral codes were regarded as precisely that: new and foreign. Freud’s notion of a superego aligning itself with the similarly inherited down the generations “phylogenetic acquisitions of the id” could be found problematical if attempts were made to use such a formulation to enable a ‘national’ superego in the circumstances of imported codes of conduct. If one were to consider ‘morality’, ‘conduct’, and ‘the law’ as formative structures of a potential nationally embodied superego in action, then one would have to consider what Leys calls in the above citation the “very considerable cross-pressure” that would bear down quite heavily upon the mental states of both individuals and groups within the populace if they felt that such moralities, conduct, and laws had been sourced externally and imposed. But the new African bourgeoisie who came into power *were* in psychic terms, according to a psychoanalytical outlook, put into a position where they had to accept the imposition of the moral codes of a foreign, alien, superego to supervise and censor their ways of behaving in the form of Leys’s stated “inherited public morality of the western nation-state”.

The conflicts between the old and the new, between the individual and the group, and between groups could give rise to an evolving, constructed, more malleable superego *or* a more rigid, less malleable superego in the form of “the

new public morality of these countries” (Leys, 1965, p. 266). But it would be a superego that had not developed over time in an African context in relation to the matters of modernization that it was being asked to rule upon. Leys states that: “It seems impossible to declare that a society without an effective public morality cannot develop economically. On the other hand, there do seem to be reasons for doubting whether in African conditions this is likely to happen” (1965, p. 228). However, what does seem probable is that “a society without an effective public morality” would be akin to *not* having an effective national superego. How would people approach and handle morally debatable behaviour like financial corruption?

In his paper Leys discusses Britain’s road during the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the changing and adapting of moral conducts that lead to the committing of fewer acts of corruption, noting that Wraith and Simpkins devoted a large section of their book to this area, too. All of them are aware that some form of structure had to be superimposed on the nation, the national mind, and national forms of behaviour in order to ensure the sustainability of moral behaviour in public office. In psychoanalysis this realization would take us to the fundamental role of the superego in critical judgment and regulation, as we have been discussing. It is illuminating to have an input into the discussion that illustrates a western country’s perspective because it clarifies and confirms that a superego would be in operation irrespective of nationality or hemisphere. The important observation made by Leys is that in contrast to the newly emerging countries on the African continent, Britain *already* had a ruling class who were in possession of their own “previously obtaining moral code” (Leys, 1965, p. 226) and with their own clear conceptions of the nature, role, and vital contributions played by public institutions and public offices. But how did the British change their standards and their moralities so that acts of corruption became acts that would be condemned and punished?

What seems to have happened is that the ruling classes were induced to accept an altered perception of the nature of the public interest and so to redefine the purposes of the public offices and state

institutions which remained, during most of this period, still under their control. It was precisely because they already had a clear notion of the public interest that the assertion of the new notion was established with such completeness. What was involved was not the establishment for the first time of a set of ideas about how public offices and institutions were to serve the public interest, but the adaptation of an established set. Britain did not, in other words, pass from a corrupt condition to a very pure one; rather it passed from one set of standards to another, *through* a period in which behaviour patterns which were acceptable by the old standards came to be regarded as corrupt according to the new.

(Leys, 1965, p. 227)

In psychoanalytic terms, it would seem that within the context of our discussion of the possibility of the conceptualization of a national superego, that the older, more developed countries, such as Britain, could be said to be already in possession of a working, active national superego in the form of “an established set” of ideas before they began their reforms, although these ideas had been ones that had not frowned upon corruption seriously. Further, such a conceptualization would allow for the national reforms that took place to be considered as processes of remoulding, reframing, and adapting of that national superego to embed new laws and new regulations. As Leys stated above: “What was involved was not the establishment for the first time of a set of ideas about how public offices and institutions were to serve the public interest, but the adaptation of an established set.” The remnants of the old and of the past could be merged into, managed alongside, or rejected and discarded for the new. It is also important to note that these changes and adaptations from the old accepted ways of doing things and conducting oneself, although enacted during the passage through a particular period of historical time (in Britain’s case, the 19<sup>th</sup> century), had evolved from their roots in the past and would be subject through time to further evolutions and adaptations.

By contrast the ruling classes of Africa are new classes, exercising a new rule. Only a minority have been brought up in ruling-class circles. The idea contained in the phrase, *noblesse oblige*, scarcely applies.

There is no previous experience, and so no prior ideology, of the roles of public offices and institutions in relation to the public interest, in terms of which the private exploitation of public office could be rationalised. There is a prevailing conception of the national interest and dedication to popular welfare. But it is precisely this idea that may be called into question by the way in which public office is actually exploited by those who occupy it. They have publicly accepted, at least by implication, the official purposes officially attached to public offices and institutions by the colonial powers.

(Leys, 1965, pp. 227-228)

To the question, did the new African countries of the 1960s become sites for the importation of “alien” laws, rules, regulations, and codes of conduct? The answer would appear to be in the affirmative, particularly because there was no previously existing *institutional* frameworks as was the case in developed countries. Leys telling comment above reveals his outlook on the situation: “There is no previous experience, and so no prior ideology, of the roles of public offices and institutions in relation to the public interest”. New institutions, new ways of working were a foreign intrusion. An unwanted critical influence, an external judgmental reality, and an invasion of the individual ego – and an obstruction of a national superego – by something unwanted, remote, perplexing, and literally unfamiliar and unrelated. Denunciations of financial corruption by such imported moral codes could fall on deaf ears.

It is clear that new states are very likely to be the scene of a great deal of behaviour that will be called corrupt. Neither attitudes nor material conditions in these countries are focused on the support of a single concept of the national interest or of the official purposes of state and local officers and institutions which would promote that interest.

(Leys, 1965, p. 224)

We would argue that on the basis of our discussion Leys’s notion above of “a single concept of the national interest” would draw psychoanalytic comparison and affinity with a national superego or at the very least a major part of its

components. He is correct to lament the lack of support for such an overarching national concept for the following reason: If, as Leys put it (as cited at the beginning of Section 2.), “the idea of a corrupted society” (Leys, 1965, p. 228) takes firm root, particularly in the absence of a conceived group of ideas focused on the national interest, then the notion of the members of the elite being and becoming the providers of ego ideals becomes endangered. In terms of psychoanalysis, ego ideals become tarnished and fail to fulfill their functions as the setters of standards and as role models to be copied. An ego ideal becomes a corrupt and corrupting ego ideal. Bayley writes that:

Politicians and civil servants constitute an elite. Their function is to give purpose to national effort. In so doing they cannot avoid setting an example others will emulate. If the elite is believed to be widely and thoroughly corrupt, the man-in-the-street will see little reason why he too should not gather what he can for himself and his loved ones.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 725)

A corrupted society could come into being because a corrupted and corrupting elite “not only debases standards popularly perceived, it forces people to undertake the underhanded approach out of self-defence. They feel they must resort to corrupt practices just to get their due” (Bayley, 1966, 726). Leys confirms that:

if this is the pattern of behaviour of the elite and if this is fairly well known, it is likely to rob them of much of their authority both with subordinates in the government and with political followers in the countryside. The country will be apt to forfeit whatever benefits can be derived by the output of effort not solely motivated by the hope of personal gain.

(Leys, 1965, p. 229)



Ordinary people would copy and act out their own minor versions of what those higher up the rungs of power were doing and not being punished for, or they would be actively involved in helping those more powerful than they were to commit the crimes. There would be those among the 'elite' who could *actively* encourage acts of corruption because such acts bolster and cement their hold on power. With the use of a psychoanalytic lens Leys emerges as being in agreement with the points raised on corruption and the negative functioning of ego ideals, as he observes that corrupt behaviour that spreads from individuals to the group could clearly provide negative impacts nationally on development:

the wealth improperly accumulated by the top elite may be modest by world standards, but still large in relation to the level of investment on which the economic development of the country depends. In this case much will turn on how such wealth is redeployed. If political leaders try to buy security by depositing their wealth in numbered accounts in Swiss banks it represents a wholly negative drain on the economy. (But perhaps they will buy farms and make them very productive.)

(Leys, 1965, p. 229)

When Leys wrote above of Swiss bank accounts and "a wholly negative drain on the economy", how unfortunate that he could not transport himself into the future to see how accurate he would be! Despite Leys own doubts, this, indeed, turned out to be a very important prediction of the future, as large amounts of money were deposited in Swiss and other European bank accounts after having been drained from national treasuries, for example, as in the case of the Nigerian head of state, Sani Abacha, during the 1990s. In the 1960s Leys felt surest about the eventuality of a failure to fulfill development plans. A failure that would be caused by a bureaucratic culture that was more focused on becoming rich than on delivering economic development. Such lack of development was a possibility which "seems most solid and even obvious" (1965, p. 229). This was because:

most African states are extremely dependent upon government action for their development. Their development prospects largely depend on attaining the targets chartered in development plans, and by very fine margins. This requires single-minded hard work from all holders of public office. If the top political elite of a country consumes its time and energy in trying to get rich by corrupt means, it is not likely that the development plans will be fulfilled.

(Leys, 1965, pp. 228-229)

Leys's thoughts on corruption's effects on the state's development planning were yet another correct prediction of what the future would hold (for example, see Mauro, 1995). The strong focus on African economies and the problem of corruption is a reflection of the extraordinary sums of money involved in the looting from state enterprises and national treasuries in conjunction with the still continuing struggle for infrastructural development and poverty reduction. Colin Leys's point about where stolen money would go – into secret Swiss bank accounts or perhaps into farming – was highly acute and relevant. His observation about the “perfectly plain differences” in “public spirit and devotion to duty” (1965, p. 229) in the behaviour and attitudes of the elites in different developing states is equally pertinent. It would confirm again psychoanalytically, that superegos could be established and be representative of the nation's interests *and* of their elites' functions and abilities to operate and influence in myriad ways according to the national interests of the particular state.

In summary, in acknowledging the requirements for duty, a public spirit, a national interest, a set of ideas, etc., in order to instil nationally anti-corruption attitudes and feelings, we return to the central conflict of such national requirements and turn to Bayley to sum up the potentially disorientating dynamics that surrounded the role that corruption played in society:

The intelligentsia, and especially top-level civil servants, in most underdeveloped nations are familiar with the Western label “corruption”, and they apply it to their own countries. Since modernization around the world is most often Westernization, the standards the intelligentsia and opinion-leaders of these countries are

trying to inculcate are Western ones. ... in Africa the conflict in the hearts of civil servants is precisely over which standard of morality should prevail, the Western or the traditional. Non-Westerners are acutely conscious of the Western meaning of corruption; they use it among themselves. And they are painfully aware that Western standards of governmental conduct condemn it.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 722)

With respect to personal gain and what psychoanalysis would term narcissism and self-regard, it is Bayley who makes the very important point on corruption that the corrupt individual puts himself *first*: “A corrupt official or politician is a self-centred individual. Can such a person be expected to put country before self, to jeopardize his prospects for the sake of prosperity for the whole country in the remote future?” (Bayley, 1966, p. 726). Putting “country before self”, that is putting the needs of the “self” second, could be argued as being against the intrinsic narcissistic notion of providing for “the self” and how that is supposed to operate in a world of an external reality of situations of impoverishment, hunger, and need.

## **12. Defending Corruption as ‘Positive’**

Western condemnation of corruption in African states was taking place during the 1960s, but could those same corrupt practices ever be viewed as a ‘positive’ phenomenon? Both Bayley and Leys believe that there are circumstances in which this could certainly be the case. Leys (1965, p. 222) asserts that: “It is natural but wrong to assume that the results of corruption are always both bad and important.” He makes the startling point that corruption can provide “strong personal incentives” to make the development of commerce in the new states quicker and even less “inefficient”:

For instance it is usually assumed that a corrupt civil service is an impediment to the establishment of foreign private enterprise, which has enough difficulties to contend with without in addition having to

pay bribes. This may be clearly the case, but sometimes also the reverse appears to be true. Where bureaucracy is both elaborate and inefficient, the provision of strong personal incentives to bureaucrats to cut red tape may be the only way of speeding the establishment of the new firm. In such a case it is certainly reasonable to wish that the bureaucracy were simpler and more efficient, but not to argue that bribery per se is an obstacle to private economic initiative.

(Leys, 1965, pp. 222-223)

Leys takes this questioning of bribery perhaps not being an obstacle further: “Even in the case of petty bribery or extortion, it is relevant to ask, What is the alternative?” (Leys, 1965, p. 220). However, as indicated at the beginning of this analytical exploration of Colin Leys and David Bayley on corruption, it is Bayley who most strongly makes the case for ‘positive’ corruption. As stated, Bayley’s position is that “corruption serves in part at least a beneficial function in developing societies” and that its effects are “*both* positive and negative” (Bayley, 1966, p. 719).

the effects of corruption *may* be beneficial in nature. I do not pretend that they always are, simply that it would not be unreasonable to find that they are. Nor does it follow that because the effects are good the means are either desirable or blameless.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 726)

It is interesting that this statement by Bayley is still striking when read today, fifty years after it was published. Although Bayley does not separate the “act” from the “effects”, the “effects of corruption *may* be beneficial in nature” and “it would not be unreasonable to find that they are”. Even its last sentence, which no doubt is supposed to act as a form of disclaimer, does not detract from the power contained in what has gone before, perhaps because it contains the phrase “because the effects are good”. Half a century later Ruggiero (2015, p. 42) notes that those in power can turn a blind eye and “opportunities are granted to ordinary citizens to benefit from minor episodes of corruption. In such societies

ordinary citizens may be led to condone large-scale corruption enacted by the elite". Acts of corruption are allowed to occur and to be beneficial to those citizens who carry them out in return for their loyalty, or their silence with regard to financial corruption carried out by those in political power or organized in powerful groups.

Bayley observes that "in both Africa and India the man who uses his official position to obtain jobs for his relatives is not considered immoral: in traditional terms, he is only doing what every loyal member of an extended family is expected to do" (1966, p. 721). Custom and tradition would act upon this man's conscience to dictate that he carry out an act newly seen to be 'corrupt'. In fact: "He would be censured if he did not act in this way" (1966, p. 721). These expectations, traditions, guilt, and censures observed by Bayley are fascinating and compelling: this could be the traditional, inherited, superego that is being observed in conflict with the new morality and the newly imported rules and regulations of a newly imported, emerging superego, a superego that is in the process of being constructed.

Emerging attitudes to acts such as bribery would have to be confronted, and here Bayley is in agreement with Leys that bribery could be a positive economic indicator of efficiency and should not automatically attract condemnation.

For example, government may desire to build a strong fertilizer industry and toward this end may have established certain requirements for the selection of firms to receive the concession. If government economists have not selected the proper indicators of efficiency, it is not far-fetched to assume that ability to offer massive bribes – bribes at least bigger than anyone else's – could be correlated with entrepreneurial efficiency. Bribes represent a peculiar element of cost, applying to all competing firms; the ability to meet it may not be unrelated to efficiency.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 727)

Bayley seems to be suggesting here that one has to *be* in a position *to* corrupt. And to be *in* such a position that would enable one to be *able* to corrupt another

individual would be making statements about the power, expertise, and ability held by that potential corruptor.

Corruption, then, is not an inherently defective means of arriving at decisions among competing claimants. The satisfactoriness of the inducement offered may correlate with features among claimants government would choose if it had better information or greater expertise in selecting criteria for decision-making.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 727)

Psychoanalysis reminds us of the kind of power held over the infant by the adult or, indeed, by the superego over the ego. This is in essence an attack on the decision-making abilities and powers of the new bureaucrats in the new states. However Bayley does proceed to add the sweetener that:

It may even be that government servants as a whole, especially at the upper levels, representing an educated elite with unique access to information about prospects for economic development, may have a greater propensity to invest in productive enterprises of a modern kind than do a cross-section of the people who seek to bribe them.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 728)

Bayley appears to be arguing that corruption does not necessarily take investment money from the hands of 'forward-thinking' modernizing entrepreneurs in order to put money into the hands of the more traditionally-minded, less outward-looking. In other words, those who receive corrupt funds may be better placed to use that money in the best interests of the nation at large. It is an extraordinary thought and it accompanies and incorporates Bayley's positive sentiments regarding the superior in education government elites with their insider knowledge of the best government investment opportunities. Bayley feels sure enough about his overall position to make this cogent general statement:

There is a common assumption that corrupt acts produce effects worse than those which would have followed from an untainted decision. This assumption is only true to the extent that the government-established – or system-established – criteria for choices are better than those served by corruption. Governments have no monopoly upon correct solutions; governments are simply one among many bureaucratic institutions which may do stupid things. Both the ends and the means served by government-constricted choices may be worse than those freely chosen and finding expression through corruption.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 727)

One would have to pause here to insert the caveat that Bayley's propositions and positive assertions regarding corruption could only work if corruption *is* actually taking place. He continues with his general statement:

Corruption may serve as a means for impelling better choices, even in terms of government's expressed goals. Nor do I think it necessary to say that corruption only occasionally, and by chance, operates in this direction. It could systematically do so, not perhaps across the board in all decisions but certainly in all decisions of a certain kind.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 727)

Moreover in terms of a developing, emerging or radically changing nation:

A transitional people may have more faith in a system they can influence in some degree through personal action than one they do not know how to manipulate by means of the institutional mechanisms provided. The human contact provided in a corrupt act may be a necessary transitional device to insure the loyalty to the new of a tradition-bound people. Perhaps it is better that people in developing nations misuse modern agencies to their own ends than that they reject the new because they cannot work the handles.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 729)

In fact corruption could actually bring people together positively to form networks of “self-interest” (1966, p.730). Conflicts between the bureaucracy and the politicians on how best to run and administer the state can be lessened by the entwining of both in acts of corruption:

Politicians accuse the bureaucrats of running a closed corporation; bureaucrats argue that politicians divert attention and resources from essential tasks. The practice of corruption may lessen this potentially crippling strain. It is one means of increasing the responsiveness of bureaucrats to individual and group needs. It also links the bureaucrat and the politician in an easily discerned network of self-interest.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 730)

As for the development of the individual and individual abilities and talent, Bayley argues that the impact of an “opportunity for corruption” could make a positive contribution towards the necessity of attracting the most talented: the calibre of potential government employees could improve:

The opportunity for corruption may actually serve to increase the quality of public servants. If wages in government service are insufficient to meet a talented man’s needs, and he has an alternate choice, he will be tempted to choose the other. On the other hand, a man anxious to serve his country through government service might opt away from non-government employment if he knew that means existed to supplement a meagre salary. Even for the man with no alternative prospects for employment, security in meeting his unavoidable obligations may enhance his willingness to serve ably and loyally.

(Bayley, 1966, p. 728)

However Bayley’s statement raises questions about the role in financial corruption of *greed* and why it can seem often to play a dominant role in the



individual's motivation to commit an act of corruption. At what point does insecurity in meeting needs and obligations on an "insufficient" and "meager salary" turn into extraordinary greed? A greed that could be described psychoanalytically as sadistic greed. The terms "kleptocrat" and "kleptocracy" (people who use their political power to steal from the state), according to dictionaries dates from the 1960s and is derived from the Greek '*kleptēs*' meaning "thief".

### **13. A Particular Kind of Greed**

But how did the greed develop and what is its significance in this particular context? Melanie Klein writes that: "Envy is the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable – the envious impulse being to take it away or to spoil it"; and that: "Jealousy is based on envy, but involves a relation to at least two people" (Klein, 1957, p. 181). Further, with regard to greed itself:

Greed is an impetuous and insatiable craving, exceeding what the subject needs and what the object is able and willing to give. At the unconscious level, greed aims primarily at completely scooping out, sucking dry, and devouring the breast: that is to say, its aim is destructive introjection; whereas envy not only seeks to rob in this way, but also to put badness, primarily bad excrements and bad parts of the self, into the mother, and first of all into her breast, in order to spoil and destroy her.

(Klein, *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946-1963*, 1957, p. 181)

A potentially destructive greed, as Klein explained whose aim is to devour *anything* and *anybody*. To want, to desire, for the sake of 'to have'. Sometimes to want and to desire just to have in order to say "*I've got this, now*". To take away from other people what other people may have. To leave other people depleted or with nothing at all in a reversal of colonialism and the 'thief' who has not been stopped with everything. Hence the destructiveness of extraordinary acts of corruption. Other people are destroyed and prevented from causing the hunger,

the pain, the lack of what was desired by the greed of the taker. It is the infantile ravenous greed of the child who refuses to give or share anything.

At hand in a developing country is a potential situation of greed versus need versus economic development, as, arguably, at its core financial corruption is about greed but it is a greed that is based on the orality of the *need* for food, as we have set out earlier in this chapter using our own definition of what 'food' would constitute. Freud did not define greed in his theories, but above assessment Klein's assessment, as "an impetuous and insatiable craving" that "aims primarily at completely scooping out, sucking dry, and devouring the breast" (Klein, 1957, p. 181) is strongly supportive of our premise of an orality-based, *food* desiring greed. Following on from *Chapter Four*, this chapter supported its deployments of key 1960s texts on corruption with key basic concepts of psychoanalysis. These have been central in leading up to the argument that is being made here that the greed that underpins financial corruption is a greed that interplays closely with the repression of primary needs and primary satisfactions. Also involved are narcissistic needs, a fractured or depleted ego, aggressive and sadistic impulses, and envy which in these terms, could even be regarded as a kind of factory for producing desire.

#### **14. The Psychoanalytic Positioning of Financial Corruption.**

Earlier in this chapter, the ways in which symbolic castration and narcissistic deficits could impact on the individual's ego, particularly in the vital area of the amount of self-regard that the ego needs in order to function. The proposition being made was that an ego fractured by colonial domination would try to repair the damage to self-regard and the wounds caused by symbolic castration by attempting to *feed* itself psychically in order to build itself up again. Using the wider definition of money, as outlined in that section, this feeding could take many forms, that is, 'feeding' would mean not merely guaranteeing food for the physical body's survival, but also searching for food in the form of desirable objects that could be considered as feeding the ego. However, money could still be considered as being the primary desirable object and the most desirable food for the ego. This would be because the ego's narcissistic need for food would be

aligned with the oral sexual drive's need for food, which unconsciously would be aligned with money. Under the oral hypothesis – to which we will return shortly – both the ego's libidinal need and the oral sexual drive would turn to the search for money as food, legally and illegally. The widespread and deep poverty in many new African nations could be regarded as providing a fertile seed-bed for the rooting of corrupt acts and practices, and an analytical dissection of what corruption actively entailed during the 1960s brought out problematics and complexities such as the contention that one could not rule out a discussion that argued for the positive outcomes and intentions of some corrupt acts.

In conjunction with the elaboration of the oral hypothesis in *Chapter Four*, what *can* be said about the possible psychical situating of 'the corrupt man' in an emerging nation adapting to an economy in which previously unimaginable new found wealth is on display and potentially to hand? In other words: *What can be attempted tentatively regarding the possible psychoanalytic positioning of those who commit an act of financial corruption?* This might be a good junction at which to provide a restating of the primary hypothesis on orality, money, and the unconscious that was reached in *Chapter Four* as a result of the psychoanalytic premises set out in that chapter. The following was put forward. The hypothesis that can now be made in this thesis is that the prototype inner state of pleasure and satisfaction from being and having been fed as an infant is an archaic prototype that persists in the unconscious permanently precisely because it is the prototype for primary satisfaction. Thus, it can be hypothesized that whatever represents and comes to symbolize the ability to provide food and nourishment will be equated unconsciously, symbolically, with the provision of basic, primary pleasure and satisfaction. And the hypothesis being made holds both for the pleasure and satisfaction received from food and any displeasure and dissatisfaction. Thus, it can be argued that what represents 'money', or the ability to purchase 'food', will come to stand in the unconscious for pleasure and satisfaction from food, or the anxiety and fear of hunger and possible starvation from the deprivation or non-availability of food.

Following and deriving from this main, primary hypothesis on orality, it was further hypothesized (at the beginning of this chapter, as well as in *Chapter Four*)

that: *'Money' could exist in a repressed oral-erotically or oral-sadistically derived, sexual instinct charged, symbolic equation with 'food' and what 'food' means to mankind's self-preservation and self image.* This chapter has attempted to map the realities confronting the individual and his relations to others, and the dilemmas and the complexities confronting those challenged by the potentialities of corrupt monetary gains. There are strong indications that there is, indeed, support for the making of both the primary and the secondary hypothesis. Further, progress *towards* orality-based theoretical formulations regarding the committing of an act of financial corruption would follow from the primary hypothesis.

But one could ask: Is any psychical positioning with regard to money a 'wrong' or a 'right' position in which to be psychically situated in a developing country context? Psychoanalysis does not think in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' but in terms of attempting to find out and understand 'why'. If there is ambivalence towards attempts to 'position' financial corruption psychoanalytically, then it has to be said that surely in the light of the work of psychoanalytic classical theory – particularly the writings by Freud and Abraham on anality and orality – there are certain psychoanalytic theoretical possibilities that can be put forward as part of a process of dialogue, discourse, and understanding of the 'why'. Indeed, following on the strong arguments put forward by David Bayley (1966) the 'right' and the 'wrong' can become somewhat blurred to absolute judgment, bringing forth the suggestion that in some instances there might not be anything absolutely negative with being a 'corrupt' person. However, writers like Wraith and Simpkins (1963) believed that financial corruption was not only totally immoral but also a social pathology and a 'wrong'. But it would be legitimate to attempt to explain social pathology by using theoretical tools and constructs given the tools and constructs conceptualized by Freud. Flexibility and openness with regards to a repressed and then unrepressed instinctual causation for an act of corruption should be maintained. Also the ambivalence of love and hate towards money – perhaps sometimes at the same time – should not be ruled out. Freud himself regarded the life and death instinct theory as "this pre-eminently dualistic view of instinctual life" (Freud, 1920, p. 49), and it should be asserted

that that would also be applicable to the component instincts of sadism and masochism. Love and hate are not always opposites or alternatives but sometimes literally on the same side of the coin.

There is little doubt that oral sadistic and oral erotic conflicts emerged in relation to the acquiring of money after independence in Nigeria and other African countries. Substantiated by the writers on the ground at the time is what psychoanalysis would be able to determine as being demonstrations of oral erotically charged behaviour and orally sadistic greed – both were involved in financially corrupt acts. The argument was made that a developing, newly emerging nation could be in a position where, as outlined in Freud's classical theory on ego instincts and sexual instincts, *both libidinal currents were joined* in pursuit of the same object, in this instance money. But a perspective that would consider financial corruption as a *wholly sadistic* activity could position an act of financial corruption not as a *joint* effort by the joined ego instincts and sexual instincts to replenish the symbolically castrated man's ego with a narcissistic supply of money from the environment – that is, *an act of oral erotism, an act of feeding, and thus of life* – but, rather, an act of financial corruption could be one carried out by an *aggressive, attacking, death instinct*. Money itself, that prized object of both the rich Europeans and the minority comprising 'the haves' in African countries, could be being attacked for not being as available to the 'have not'. Thus, *this thesis also argues that an act of financial corruption could be committed narcissistically and oral-erotically to restore the status of the ego or could be an act committed to inflict oral-sadistic wounding upon the money itself or its original owner.*

In the final chapter, *Chapter Six*, the discussion on how financial corruption can potentially be positioned psychoanalytically is continued. The discussion turns to concluding reflections in the context of the overall narrative on orality that has been taking place in this thesis and will look towards the possible areas of inquiry that can be opened up to new and further dialogues.

## **Chapter Six**

### **CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS**

The final chapter of my thesis has been entitled *Concluding Reflections* for the following reason: in the course of this journey of investigation into how one

can begin to think about the root causes of financial corruption in a psychoanalytic way, there were some further intriguing and notable strands of thought that deserved to be included in this investigation, but, in order to justify their inclusion and to comprehend them better, they would need to be discussed following the establishment of the overall narrative of an attempted discourse on psychoanalysis and financial corruption. As we reach this concluding chapter, it would seem fair to claim that a narrative has indeed come to the fore, one that has brought into relation with each other certain key ideas, in particular the key thematic areas of orality and its primacy, the narcissistic need for money that widens the definition of what food can become, the various motives for financial corruption that highlight an underlying orality and encompass that broader definition of what food is, and the probabilities of an individual's psychoanalytic disposition during the committing of financially corrupt acts. The reflections being highlighted in this chapter enter into this discourse at this point because they help to shed further light on why it was important to construct that dual carriageway that allowed us to travel with orality, and not only anality by our side, as we journeyed into discussions on the unconscious and money. The potential of the discussions that can now be embarked upon now appear to be richer and more free-flowing.

The reflections in this chapter begin with pursuing a line of thinking on the notion of 'the office' and its status as the central object being abused by corrupt practices, something which was already touched upon in the first part of *Chapter Five*. This is then followed by a discussion as to whether money should be considered as an object of perversion; a section on retaining the theory of anality alongside the oral hypothesis; and an engagement with the potential of separating out the unconscious causations of the interest in money and the spending of money. This chapter and the thesis then ends with some thoughts on Freud and the lacunae around the important topic money within psychoanalysis generally. Thus, the preceding contents of *Chapter Four* and *Chapter Five* on orality and financial corruption form the theoretical underlying contributions to this chapter whose reflections may suggest potential for future dialogue and for other discourses to emerge.

## 1. The 'Office' and Financially Corrupt Practices

Following the observations and critiques by writers on corruption and Africa in *Chapter Five*, the subject of financial corruption in Africa during the 1960s has been addressed quite expansively. But there is still something enigmatic and elusive to grasp about the status of 'the office' and why it has been so critical to the prevailing discourse on financial corruption. As suggested in *Chapter Five* a prestigious or powerful office on its own merits, that is without any occupant installed, commands considerable powers that are already embedded and enshrined. The office itself wields the ability to corrupt independently of the corrupt nature, or potentially corruptible nature, of any occupant of that office. One can enter "office" *expecting* to behave corruptly, to act out, to satisfy the urge, instinct, impulse, craving to achieve great wealth, *or* the surroundings and environment of the post, the position, and the office itself could unrepres the urge, the need, the love for money, wealth, and even more power.

A suggestion that could be made here is that perhaps there should be less of a strong focus on the notion of 'the office', which many definitions position as the central entity that is to be abused. However, as we have seen in Africa and Asia, particularly in the 1960s, corruption and "politics" and political office-holders appeared from the prevailing discourse to go hand in hand.

Politics was access to 'power' – particularly in a developing society, and 'power' provided opportunities for corrupt practices, that is, the 'abuse' of that power. Political power is thus, it would seem, a necessary *conduit* for corruption. And at its very highest level there are the claims of absolute power corrupting absolutely. But to state that would be to suggest that no politics and no political power would equal no corruption, which would be incorrect. Corruption can pervade every sphere of life (as was examined in *Chapter Five*), not just politics: from the most top-level jobs to the most ordinary and relatively low-level occupations. It is not necessary to be in politics and in power, that is, in an 'office', to be corrupt.



It seems clear that it is possible to argue that the ‘offices’ and the ‘institutions’ that are “abused” – as in the standard definitions of financial corruption – for personal monetary gain are offices and institutions that had no connection with an African *unconscious reality*, because the modern western notions of ‘power’, ‘the law’, and ‘the office’ had little historical context and relation. For example, one could ask what was the notion of ‘the Treasury’ in an African historical context in the minds of the individuals involved in acts of theft? The act of “stealing from the Treasury” or “looting the Treasury” becomes less infused with moral outrage and illegitimacy if the notion and concept of ‘*the* state Treasury’ is *not* one that is rooted in an African historical, social, or cultural narrative. As we have seen in *Chapter Five*, it can be argued that certain notions of the power of the bureaucracy and the law have been *imported* into Africa and what is operating on the ground are western concepts that are still unfamiliar and perhaps *unconsciously* unwanted by Africans even to the present day.

It is a challenge to the constitution of what ‘power’ is and the constitution of ‘the law’ in an African context, that the ideas and philosophies contained in them were formed *outside* of Africa over hundreds of years. And yet the concepts and philosophies underlying an African exercise of those laws have been adopted virtually wholesale in most African countries almost like a psychoanalytic acceptance of a command from the ‘law of the Father’. It is a commonplace today, for instance, to see lawyers in African countries in sweltering heat attired in the wigs and gowns of lawyers and judges in the United Kingdom. A battered, fractured, depleted ego might welcome the exterior adornment of the apparel of the former colonial master, (particularly in the roles, such as the law, in which such master had wielded enormous powers), but what of the unconscious? What of the id? There might well be a rebellion brewing in the interior. With regard to the cases of national or state politicians looting from national or local state treasuries, financial corruption might be considered as an unconscious attack on the imposition of such ‘foreign’ concepts. Financial corruption could be regarded as the *unconscious refusal* to take on board what are deemed to be foreign concepts and, thus, financially corrupt acts could be construed as a rebellion

against the 'law of the Father' and the conscious implementation of the directives of powerful institutions.

*Is there really harm being done by corruption?* The "harm" done by the attaining of money through illegitimate means could be a mere perception, the manifestation of envy and greed on the part of those who do not have access to the same amount of wealth and influence or the same access to the means to attain equivalent amounts of wealth. The negative economic developmental impacts and poverty said to be caused by corruption could be the responsibility of other inhibiting and restricting factors that prevent positive development. 'Corruption' and 'corrupt acts' can become comparatively easier targets for blame and finger-pointing in order to avoid dealing with what could be closer to the real underlying problems. There is no logical causal linkage between corruption and lack of, or poor, economic development as some countries with proven corruption have managed to develop their countries as well, providing good infrastructure, for example, in Asia and, in particular, China where development has proceeded apace and efficiently *without* the effective stamping out of corruption. It is also possible that the enforced 'free market' reforms of the 1980s and 1990s – for example, structural economic adjustment policies and privatizations – *created* conditions in which office-holders in developing countries, particularly in Africa, found financial temptation difficult to resist. As in the 1960s, there was a stark contrast between 'office' incomes and what other people and officials in the private sector were set to earn through the internationally demanded, heavily promoted privatization and sales of assets and resources previously held by the state. Thus, despite their stringent criticisms of corruption, it could be said that international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund hold some responsibility for corrupt practices. It could be argued that their policies during the 1980s and 1990s of enforcing highly controversial structural adjustment policies with the ensuing belt tightening and sharp cost of living increases helped to create conscious and unconscious climates of resentment and retaliation that led to what could be characterized as retaliations and attacks on the relevant

state's finances, resources, and newly privatized industries via theft, bribery and embezzlement.

Let us return to the notion of a particularly stark kind of poverty that is engulfing an emerging, developing, or transitional people. In the 1960s financial corruption could be seen as a correlate of poverty, and, or, a correlate of the perception of being poor when compared to, (in the eyes of), the Other. The preferred focus taken by this study was on the 'individual': on *the abuser* and *the abused*, in the sense of human victims, human personalities with their human conscious and unconscious motivations and reactions. Africa appeared to have a specific problem of corruption, both individual and systemic, and low economic development giving rise to the possibility of there being in the future the *hidden, private, institutionalization of corruption* in subtle forms in some countries. Accompanied by the emergence, perhaps, of the perception of *normal corruption*, when corrupt practices have become so prevalent that they are almost taken for granted, making the rooting out of corruption an equally almost idealistic endeavour. What will societies in future accept or not accept when it comes to actions that are deemed to be 'corrupt' practices? We will have to continue to determine and define what is 'abuse' of office, power, position, influence, privilege, or access. Corruption moves rapidly towards becoming the answer to the question of how does someone "make money" or accumulate wealth in countries that seem unable to create enough jobs (and therefore money and well-being) in sustainable amounts for the majority of their people. In the situations where corruption becomes almost a way of life and the only way to earn a living for an increasing number of individuals we enter into dialogue regarding what will be tolerable or bearable for "the good of society".

Money does not necessarily have to change hands corruptly 'under the table' or in a 'brown envelope' for money and opportunities to be obtained further down the road by the same people, the same cliques, the same cadres or 'elite' groups. Over a period of time it could be possible that any consistently one-way traffic of the supply of lucrative benefits to a person or to a small number of people or companies – thereby excluding others from being able to obtain the same kind of benefits and treatment – becomes corrupt whilst not breaking any applicable

laws. Indeed, 'crony capitalism' is deemed to be a pejorative term. The ways in which those who hold power disburse power and influence and the opportunities to make money without breaking the law is of importance and of consequence.

## **2. The Oral Drive and Wealth Accumulation**

The argument at the core of this thesis is that there is a strong case to be made for *orality* as the psychological underpinning of the need, urge, instinct, drive for the amassing and accumulation of money and wealth. Freud stated that the instincts or drives (the choice of term is dependent on one's translation of the German word: 'Trieb') were the "most abundant sources" of "internal excitation" and the "representatives of all the forces originating in the interior of the body and transmitted to the mental apparatus" (Freud, 1920, p. 34). This thesis has argued that orality in the form of the oral instinct/drive, engendered during the oral development phase, is likely to have strong plausible connections with financially corrupt behaviour. The repetition of the most primary experience of need for food and satisfaction of hunger is key. Orality is a valuable tool in understanding. Steps in the progress towards a psychoanalytic theory pertaining to acts of financial corruption would have been difficult to make without it. Indeed, key elements of what was written theoretically about anality and money were actually also highly pertinent to our alternate reading of orality and money, as we have attempted to highlight in *Chapter Two* and *Chapter Four*. The subject of anality will be returned to shortly but first, let us consider another example from Ferenczi (1914), one which brings to the fore the way in which interpretation is necessary in order to bring out the duality and potential similarity of the impacts of the two developmental phases upon the relationship between money and the unconscious. Ferenczi, speaking only in terms of anality, wrote that:

After what has been communicated, however, it is already not improbable that the capitalistic interest, increasing in correlation with development, stands not only at the disposal of practical, egoistic aims – of the reality-principle, therefore – but also that the delight in

gold and in the possession of money represents the symbolic replacement of, and the reaction-formation to, repressed anal-erotism, i.e., that it also satisfies the pleasure-principle.

The capitalistic instinct thus contains, according to our conception, an egoistic and an anal-erotic component.

(Ferenczi, *The Ontogenesis of the Interest in Money*, 1914, p. 331)

The importance of repression applies to both stages of development. But the argument of this thesis is that the delight in gold and money is “the symbolic replacement of, and the reaction-formation to” *repressed oral-erotism*. And Ferenczi’s “capitalistic instinct” is akin to a wealth accumulation drive and Fenichel’s (1938) “drive to amass wealth”. Under the oral hypothesis money has been positioned as being unconsciously oral. Repressed greed (or as the oral hypothesis would frame it: repressed desire for more mother’s milk) could become unrepressed and aligned with the desire to be entitled *to be* greedy, to demand more with the kind of sadistic demands that were outlined in *Chapter Four’s* discussion of Abraham’s theories on sadistic orality.

Thus, what would be potentially at stake would be either the repression, or the malignant, pathological, *corrupted* development of that desire for money, that desire for the narcissistic supply of multiple forms of food from the environment that have to be gained at all costs. Notions of desire, notions of lack of the desired object, of loss, and of ‘not having’ what one could ‘have’ are some of the vital considerations that were discussed in *Chapter Five*. In terms of financial corruption, the desire being desire for monetary gain at whatever cost – remembering that ‘food’ under the wider definition (that is, for both physical and egotistical needs) used by the oral hypothesis is later unconsciously and inextricably connected to money. Within the terms of the oral hypothesis suggested in this thesis, when money is held in any form be it in notes, coins, plastic, or accounts, we have *unconsciously* reassured ourselves that our ability to access food is attainable and secure. It is worthwhile providing here a reminder in the form of a summary from Jones (1916) of the process involved in the formation of symbolic equations, as was explored in *Chapter Two*:

In so far as a secondary idea B receives its meaning from a primary idea A, with which it has been identified, it functions as what may be called a symbolic equivalent of A. At this stage, however, it does not yet constitute a symbol of A, not until it replaces A as a substitute in a context where A would logically appear. There is an overflow of feeling and interest from A to B, one which gives B much of its meaning, so that under appropriate conditions it is possible for B to represent A. According to the view here maintained, the essential element of these conditions is an affective inhibition relating to A. This holds good for all varieties of symbolism, in its broadest sense.

With the debit and credit card we have abstracted even further the symbolic equation and symbolism that connects money and access to food. The physical presence of the small square of plastic with its raised letterings and codified numbers unconsciously signifies by its insertion into and approval by computerised machines that food is guaranteed and its availability does not have to be thought about or cause unconscious anxiety. As Jones put it succinctly: “Only what is repressed is symbolised; only what is repressed needs to be symbolised” (Jones, 1916, p. 116).

In *Chapter Five* it has been argued that the psychoanalytic roots of financial corruption could have strong bases in the individual’s internal and external realities, that is, his unconscious and conscious thoughts and feelings; relations with money and wealth; relations to others in a particular society; and relations with society’s ideological structures in a particular historical setting. Fenichel (1938) pointed out that: “It is a society in which power and respect are based upon the possession of money, that makes of this need for power and respect a need for riches” (Fenichel, 1938, p. 79). Crucially, he asked:

Is not the state of affairs with the will to possession exactly the same as with the instinct to become wealthy: in a social system in which possession presents the possibility of satisfying needs or of acquiring respect, is not possession aspired to just as a special case of the striving for the satisfaction of needs, or for respect? But just at this point psychoanalysts have discovered that behind these rational motives there are further irrational ones for accumulating possessions, and it is exactly the question of the relation between this

specific irrational 'collecting instinct' and the general 'drive to become wealthy' that is under discussion.

(Fenichel, 1938, p. 79)

For Fenichel: "The will to power on the one hand, and the will to possession on the other, are roots of the drive to amass wealth" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 87).

Fenichel uses the term 'the drive to amass wealth'. This calls up the notion of the existence of a potential 'money drive'. It could also be called a 'wealth accumulation drive'. In this thesis the attempt has been made to argue that, in terms of what it defines as the oral hypothesis, a wealth accumulation drive could be triggered in anybody under the right circumstances, particularly in countries experiencing great economic, societal, and transitional changes. "A drive to accumulate wealth" states Fenichel in support, "exists only in certain definite social epochs" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 95). He urges that research should be "based on as many historical examples as possible so that we may compare the drive to amass wealth in other times and societies with that of today" (Fenichel, 1938, p. 94). This insightful statement appears to amplify a sense that some things are difficult to shift in that human beings will keep seeing the reassurance of wealth accumulation and the subsidiary possessions that accompany wealth in many societies, such as power and respect.

This thesis suggested a hypothesis of orality whereby it was argued that which 'money' represents, ie the ability to purchase food, will come to stand in the unconscious for pleasure and satisfaction from food, or the anxiety and fear of hunger and possible starvation from the deprivation or non-availability of food. And further that: 'Money' could exist in a repressed oral-erotically or oral-sadistically derived, sexual instinct charged, symbolic equation with 'food' and what 'food' means to mankind's self-preservation and self image.

In the last section of *Chapter Five* some possibilities were opened up as a result of the inquiry exploring the probable positioning of financial corruption in relation to a possible money drive (or wealth accumulation drive, or drive to amass wealth). Financial corruption could probably be considered as an orally

erotic or an orally sadistic activity. In other words, financially corrupt acts could be unconscious acts of 'feeding', and thus of life preservation; or acts driven by unconscious aggressive, destructive instincts. As stated at the end of Chapter Five, an act of financial corruption could be committed narcissistically and orally to restore the status of the ego or could be an act committed to inflict oral-sadistic wounding upon the money itself or its original owner. And, an important, notable factor emerged from the arguments and perspectives elaborated generally in Chapter Five (arguments that were made both through the narratives of writers in Africa during the 1960s and through classical Freudian psychoanalytic texts): the person committing the act of financial corruption could bring into being a new conception of the psychoanalytic reality of who he was and new conceptions of how he perceived the realities and rights of those around him.

However, when one considers the possible psychoanalytic situating of an individual in relation to an act of financial corruption there does seem to be another perspective that should also be addressed, albeit briefly due to its complexity and vast associative range in psychoanalytic theory. This area concerns terms that were frequently used descriptively in the discourse, that is, '*perverted*' and '*perversion*'. In particular Colin Leys (1965), who figured in a key manner in *Chapter Five* equated 'corruption' as: "to change from good to bad; to debase; to pervert" (Leys, 1965, p. 216). It is also worthwhile remembering that Leys stated further that the rule or regulation that was contravened in an act of corruption had to have "the sense in which it is said to have been perverted" (Leys, 1965, p. 221). And, to reiterate, he asked acutely: "Who regards the purpose which is being perverted as the proper or 'official' purpose? It may be so regarded by most people in the society, including those who pervert it; or it may be so regarded by only a few people" (Leys, 1965, p. 221-222). It is not the aim of this concluding chapter to enter into the substantial arena of perversion within psychoanalytic theory. Our intention here is only to add to our discussion a perspective on perversion with respect to money and corruption which will suggest future avenues for research. Briefly, we would adhere to our initial commitment to return to Freud and his foundational classical psychoanalytic



thinking in order to address the psychoanalytic possibility of a perverse relation to money as a *sexualized* object.

### **3. Money as an Object of Perversion**

Can an act of financial corruption be considered as an act of a *perverted relation to money*? That is, money has become an object of perversion, an object of a perverse aim because *money has become a wholly sexual object*. Some further interesting questions can be raised, such as: Can an act of financial corruption be, therefore, the result of a *perverted aim* of the sexual oral (money) drive? Can such perverted aims be a characteristic of financial corruption generally or only feature in some specific cases? But, these questions can only be raised and not be pursued in any depth as they relate to perverse activities and are thus somewhat outside the range and scope of this research study. But the raising of them would seem to be required to illustrate the possible nature of the perverse relation to money that we are attempting to address in this section. In addition, questions about ‘perversion’ in general are questions that are, indeed, related to this investigation in the following respect.

This thesis has argued for the consideration of sadistic activities and sadistic desires as underlying acts of financial corruption, and thus it is important to note that in classical Freudian theory on the sexual instincts (Freud, 1905) sadism itself and its counterpart masochism are regarded as a ‘perversion’ of the sexual instinct in that they are diversions from what would be considered as being either the normal satisfying goal or the normal final aim of an instinct/drive. A perverse act diverts from what is regarded as being the normal. Freud states that: “From the very first we recognized the presence of a sadistic component in the sexual instinct. As we know, it can make itself independent and can, in the form of a perversion, dominate an individual’s entire sexual activity” (Freud, 1920, pp. 53-54). And he noted that: “Sadism and masochism occupy a special position among the perversions, since the contrast between activity and passivity which lies behind them is among the universal characteristics of sexual life” (Freud, 1905, p. 159). Thus, in discussing oral sadism and orally sadistic activities, for example, we are already, in a strong sense, discussing activities that can be designated as perversions.

The assumption that has to be made is that there exists a 'normal', *legitimate* aim in the pursuit of money. That is, that a 'normal', *uncorrupted* pursuit of money and finance is *normal*. There is a legitimate need of money that exists for reasons that have been set out previously in this study (in *Chapter Three*), for example: for physical survival, for a decent standard of living, or for work or consultation conducted that requires the financial settlement of bills. The 'normal' aim of a drive for money could be regarded as being for a 'good enough' income. Thus, the *illegitimate* pursuit and acquiring of money could comprise the 'abnormal', that is, the 'perverse', the excessive. And a minority of people in behaving in such corrupt ways and contravening rules could be carrying out what were regarded by the majority as being 'perverse', immoral acts. *The pursuit of and acquiring of money illegally, corruptly, could be regarded as a perversion of a normal wealth accumulation drive.* When a perverse aim totally removes the normal aim, then it can be regarded as a "pathological symptom" as Freud explained (the italics are his):

In the majority of instances the pathological character in a perversion is found to lie not in the *content* of the new sexual aim but in its relation to the normal. If a perversion, instead of appearing merely *alongside* the normal sexual aim and object, and only when circumstances are unfavourable to *them* and favourable to *it* – if, instead of this, it ousts them completely and takes their place in *all* circumstances – if, in short, a perversion has the characteristics of exclusiveness and fixation – then we shall usually be justified in regarding it as a pathological symptom.

(Freud, 1905, p. 161)

The probing question that continued from the end of *Chapter Five* concerned the possible theoretical positionings that could be reached psychoanalytically with regard to financial corruption. Now, to augment what has been expressed in that chapter, it can be seen that there is an additional consideration as to how the oral drive might be operating with regard to financial corruption. It allows for the possibility of the *perverse fixation* of the oral drive to be considered alongside the more straightforward uninhibited unleashing and unrepressing of the oral

(money, wealth accumulation) drive that has been drawn so far. *Could not an act of financial corruption be a perverted aim of the oral drive, which itself can be characterized as a money drive?* With regard to Freud's use of the phrase "pathological symptom" in his acute description of the process of perversion in the above citation, perhaps the following could be said about financial corruption from the perspective of an act of perversion: *Financial corruption could be positioned as a symptom of perversion emanating from the oral conflicts arising out of the repression of a wealth accumulation drive.*

Returning to the consideration of the hostile individual with an ego starved of respect, love, regard, money: in other words, an ego that was desperately seeking 'food' but living in a deeply impoverished environment with few ego ideals, how easily and how quickly could his aims become diverted from the normal, legitimate pursuit of money and become attracted to and fixed upon the new perverse aim of financial corruption? Why would an African present this symptom of a repressed wealth accumulation drive? On asking this question – that is, why would he have become involved in financial corruption – this could lead to an answer suggesting that this had occurred because he was unable to earn money or prevented from accumulating wealth in a legal, 'normal', 'traditional' fashion. He was poor. Or he was in a rush to accumulate as much money as possible as quickly as possible. If financial corruption *is* a symptom, then that is, perhaps, because symptoms can be perceived as ways of behaving. If its symptom-like qualities have been little perceived as such, perhaps that is because particular behaviour patterns can manifest themselves over time as routine and normalized in the eyes of others. Symptoms could become ways of *continual* behaviour, and can even constitute permanent formations or foundations of character, as Freud (1908) expounded upon with regard to anality and character formation. 'Symptoms' cannot, it appears, be regarded as one-off or only temporary demonstrations of character or behaviour caused by a particular occurrence or illness. What if symptoms *are* your character, or that your character is composed of a finely mixed melange of symptoms, that can no longer detangle themselves? You *are* your symptoms, in that case; your symptoms are you. One aspect of this could mean that one could develop

substantial parts of one's character much later in life due to traumatic impacts perceived and received in adulthood – such as extreme poverty – rather than having much of one's character laid down as a result of traditional development theory adhering to the stages as outlined in classical psychoanalysis. As Freud observed, we are throughout life continually reacting to what we consider to be unsatisfied needs and what we consider to be threats of danger:

Most of the unpleasure that we experience is *perceptual* unpleasure. It may be perception of pressure by unsatisfied instincts; or it may be external perception which is either distressing in itself or which excites unpleasurable expectations in the mental apparatus – that is, which is recognized by it as a 'danger'. The reaction to these instinctual demands and threats of danger, a reaction which constitutes the proper activity of the mental apparatus, can then be directed in a correct manner by the pleasure principle or the reality principle by which the former is modified.

(Freud, 1920, p. 11)

Note Freud's usage of "pressure by unsatisfied instincts" and "instinctual demands and threats of danger" which are reacted to by the workings of the mental apparatus either in accordance with the pleasure principle or in accordance with the reality principle "by which the former is modified". Therefore when reality does *not* modify the pleasure principle, the pleasure principle reigns dominant and repressed or unsatisfied instinctual demands do their best to satisfy themselves. Instinctual demands such as the demand to have wealth and money and a certain standard of living that only a significant amount of money can buy? Money that if one cannot earn legitimately, will have to be obtained illegitimately, corruptly, stolen. Regarding the frequency and commonality of what could be described as perverted aims, Freud writes that:

No healthy person, it appears, can fail to make some addition that might be called perverse to the normal sexual aim; and the universality of this finding is in itself enough to show how inappropriate it is to use the word perversion as a term of reproach.

(Freud, 1905, p. 160)

In conclusion, the consideration of a perverse fixation in relation to money as an object has been added to our efforts to broach possible psychoanalytic positionings for acts of financial corruption. It is our argument that the possible positionings outlined tentatively at the end of *Chapter Five* and in this section all have in common orality as the underlying sexual drive. They can be considered as acts of narcissistic feeding, whether oral erotically or oral sadistically, or a perverse act denoting a symptom arising from oral conflicts.

To reiterate: *An act of financial corruption could be committed narcissistically and oral-erotically to restore the status of the ego or could be an act committed to inflict oral-sadistic wounding upon the money itself or its original owner. And there is also the possibility that: An act of financial corruption could be a perverted aim of the oral sexual drive, which this thesis has hypothesized as the primary money drive.*

The overall research question of this study was: What could be the possible psychoanalytic roots of financial corruption? The motor engine for the decision to investigate orality as being a potentially rich source for a psychoanalytic discourse on financial corruption was the dissatisfaction with the psychoanalytic theory on the relationship between money and the unconscious that was based on the anal development phase. The anality theory of money was constructed during the years of the classical period following the turn of the century and prior to the outbreak of the second world war, and *Chapter Two* outlined Ferenczi's classical delineation based on Freud's writings. This thesis has argued for a duality of thinking on the unconscious and money in order to assert a place for orality. Thus, in order to maintain a duality of thought, a double door, a dual key approach, should not the anality theory of money sit alongside the oral hypothesis and be retained.

#### **4. Retaining Anality Alongside Orality: “Potty” Deposits and Food Containers**

It is important to state that the anal theory of money has not been rejected outright – there are very likely to be areas in which anal characteristics could be argued as being related to financial concerns or as being connected to some or part of the conflicts aroused. But it was to be questioned why anal erotism should be awarded an especially privileged place in theories on money. In his paper ‘Contributions to the Theory of the Anal Character’ Abraham (1921) reminds us of some of the Freudian processes at work and some of the formations of character:

In his first description of the anal character Freud has said that certain neurotics present three particularly pronounced character-traits, namely, a love of orderliness which often develops into pedantry, a parsimony which easily turns to miserliness, and an obstinacy which may become an angry defiance. He established the fact that the primary pleasure in emptying the bowels and in its products was particularly emphasized in these persons; and also that after successful repression their coprophilia either becomes sublimated into pleasure in painting, modelling, and similar activities, or proceeds along the path of reaction-formation to a special love of cleanliness. Finally he pointed out the unconscious equivalence of faeces and money or other valuables.

Freud, Ferenczi, Jones, Abraham – the foundational classical psychoanalytic theorists examined in this research study – all believed in “the unconscious equivalence of faeces and money”. Here Abraham is accepting this and not questioning the supposedly “unconscious” foundation of the equation. What was baffling was how all of them accepted the anal theory of money whilst at the same time all of them set out the foremost importance during the child’s anal period of the educational element involved in training a child in how and when to empty its bowels and what not to do with the contents. Jones (1918) detailed further what the sublimations and reaction-formations entailed for the anal character. As argued in this thesis, the psychoanalytic significance placed by the theoretical writers upon the character traits in the adult traced backwards to the anal developmental period of the infant had severe implications with regard to money, for it would imply that, if the symbolic equation were correct and

unconscious, then people with ‘money complexes’ – and that would include financial corruption – would *all* be people whose character formation was anal erotic in type. Classical psychoanalytic theory implied that there was specifically an ‘anal character’ – note, for instance, the titles of the papers by Freud (1908), Jones (1918), and Abraham (1921) – someone whose character formation was devolved from and heavily influenced by their experiences during this infantile period. The interesting focus and privilege awarded to anal erotism generally and to its part in the formation of character was in stark contrast to the attention paid to the other pregenital stage, orality, which, as has been argued throughout, deserved a much greater focus and emphasis than that given to it. The disquieting thought had been that, surely character types had some aspects of a legacy from *both* their oral and anal periods of development. The special significance or special contribution of anality could not be upheld. Abraham (1924a, p. 398) beautifully connects orality and anality when he speaks of “the abandoned act of sucking” leading to abnormal anality, which, to reiterate from *Chapter Four*, he terms as “defective development” that is built upon “the ruins of an oral erotism whose development has miscarried.” But let us discuss a more prosaic contender for the main connective point between anality and orality that should be highlighted as affirming the eligibility of the two to be considered together: their storage systems.

The connective point that can be made that retains anality alongside orality is with regard to containers. A “potty” to collect faeces can be viewed as a container, a bank, a deposit holder. Ferenczi’s statement that children “hold back their stools” and that: “The excrementa thus held back are really the first ‘savings’ of the growing being” (Ferenczi, 1914, p. 321) could be equally applied to an oral motif. The stools being held back are not yet in the potty – they are in the intestine. Food that is held in the stomach whilst being digested, or prior to digestion, could also be considered a ‘deposit’, a “saving”. It should be remembered that the alimentary canal journeys from the mouth to the anus, therefore, why should the last part, the intestines, where food has been processed into faeces and is waiting to be evacuated, be privileged over earlier parts where food is held and also awaits its turn during the process of digestion?

But it could be argued that one has no physical control over the process of digestion, that one cannot prevent it from taking place; whilst the infant does have some control over whether to allow the faeces to emerge or not, over whether to “go” whilst on the potty. However, such control is only temporary; at some point the physical process of defaecation, the necessity of having to defaecate, will take over. And anybody who has had diarrhoea is aware that there is no temporary or short-lived physical control: the faeces must come out. Thus, it is possible that one can argue that food deposits in the stomach could equal faeces deposits in the bowels of the alimentary canal. As such, the rest of the citation also becomes applicable to the stomach as a region akin to a bank for “collecting, hoarding, and saving”:

children originally devote their interest without any inhibition to the process of defaecation, and [that] it affords them pleasure to hold back their stools. The excrementa thus held back are really the first “savings” of the growing being, and as such remain in a constant, unconscious inter-relationship with every bodily activity or mental striving that has anything to do with collecting, hoarding, and saving.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 321)

But it is not only faeces that have the ability to be collected and thus to be symbolically equivalent to something that is collected or saved. Oral goods – gastronomic (as opposed to coprophilic) objects – can also be collected or saved. Most importantly, people also *hoard* food. And food is even stacked *as* hoarded goods. Supermarket shelves can be conceptualized as selling and displaying food as hoarded goods in multiple rows and shelves upon shelves. Then there is the food hoard in containers of multiple packets and tins and kept in the home. This could also be considered as the equivalent of anality’s potty. Finally, with regard to orality and its right to be alongside anality: surely the mother’s breast and its contents should be regarded as *the first store for possessing food and collecting food*. The first saving is mother’s milk in the breast for the yet to be born and fed child.



There is the interesting perspective that generally in many African countries the fat stomach of a man is particularly regarded as the guarantor that he is a wealthy man. The factors at play here are: the largeness of his stomach, the knowledge that it has had so much food deposited inside it, that he has had *the ability to purchase* such an amount of food to consume that this access to money has given rise to the size of his stomach, all denote a rich, wealthy person. In Africa's recent past, as African countries emerged onto the world stage following their independence from colonialism, a fat man was a rich man – and paraded himself as such. In western countries, it seems to be the opposite: rich people are not supposed to be too fat or even fat at all. There is the popular saying, "You can never be too rich or too *thin*", whereby the two situations are equated as being related in their equal height of desirability and connectivity. There is also the stigma attached to fatness and large waistlines and their linkage to poverty and the consumption of cheap, high fat, high sugar food products by significant numbers of those on low incomes.

In conclusion, Ferenczi charged in his paper that:

Pleasure in the intestinal contents becomes enjoyment of money, which, however, after what has been said is seen to be nothing other than odourless, dehydrated filth that has been made to shine.

(Ferenczi, 1914, p. 327)

One could add, however, that: "Pleasure in the intestinal contents becomes enjoyment of money", is equally applicable to and also originates from another source: the mouth. It could be that: *'enjoyment of money' is also orally derived* and not only attributable to anality. This is the argument that we support.

But can the enjoyment in and interest in money be separated from the spending of money? Given the general dearth of detailed theoretical work about a psychoanalytic positioning of money, one can hypothesise that what may have been conflated is the spending of money with the interest in money.

## 5. The 'Interest in Money' versus the 'Spending of Money'

Abraham could have distinguished theoretically between the *spending of money* and the *interest in money*, as the title of his paper, 'The Spending of Money in Anxiety States' (Abraham, 1917) suggested that he might do. However, he seemed not to have wanted to consider differentiating between the two activities and certainly did not challenge the existing Freudian paradigm with regard to what money was symbolically aligned with. As elaborated in this study, excrement's alleged linkage to money is based wholly on classical psychoanalysis's linkage of possessions and gifts to faeces: the infant's stools presented to the mother or parental carer. Added to this is the material link between possessions and gifts and the economic requirement for gold, currency, money, which that necessitates in order to purchase those possessions and gifts. These linkages form a trio of inter-connected assumptions based on 'possessions and gifts', 'faeces', and concepts and constructions of money. One could even regard these three assumptions as forming a triangular structure of their own interconnected relations.

It can be positioned as a true statement that possessions, gifts, wealth, feeling and being financially rich, are linked to having money (held in its various forms). But the foundational assumption made in classical psychoanalysis that 'faeces' equals 'money' (for example, gold) is contestable. It is contested on the inadequacy of the existence of substantive *unconscious* evidence for there being an untutored, uneducated a priori relationship in the psyche between faeces and possessions and gifts. As discussed in numerous ways in the preceding pages, this led to an ultimately unsatisfactory psychoanalytic theoretical relationship between faeces and money. Such an unsatisfactory relationship would have clinical, practical, socio-economical, and cultural repercussions. As argued, rather than dirt and faeces, a more appropriate symbolic interpretation for money would be anything connected with and to *food*, the means of its attainability and its eating and digestion. That is, the psychoanalytic symbolization of money should be more oral than anal in its potential for erotic and object cathexis.

But although psychoanalytic thinkers did not question closely the supposed link between anal erotism and an “interest” in money, a few years after Ferenczi’s paper on the *interest* in money (Ferenczi, 1914), Abraham raised, correctly, the question of the *spending* of money (Abraham, 1917). However this proved ultimately unsatisfactory, since he did not differentiate “interest” in from the “spending” of money. Abraham’s curt handling of the topic of the spending of money indicated that he didn’t think it warranted more than the few pages in which it was disposed of and without any need to add or to formulate new theoretical speculation or hypotheses. Both tendencies and activities, that is “interest in” and “spending of” money were still sourced to anal erotism. This was a missed opportunity to open the exploration of and, perhaps, even lay down the foundations for the possible future study of alternative hypotheses on money. It could be argued that perhaps it is the *spending* of money that is rooted in anal eroticism, that is, miserliness, hoarding, being a spendthrift, etc. All these individual characteristics can be aligned with and psychoanalytically rooted in an anal erotic organization.

We have the general instruction from classical psychoanalysis that it is important to remember that the symbolization of a ‘thing’ or a construct should be innate in the language used by a people or place. Just as pertinent, such symbolization should also be intricately woven into myths, folktales, and other stories and narratives. The ‘thing’ symbolized and its symbolic structuring and rendering, however abstract, should emerge within the common language used with little consciously forced thinking or interpretation. It is in the expressions, the idioms, the sayings and phrases that we are often most likely to find the true *unconscious* meaning of a ‘thing’ or an abstracted notion. Note how the expression “to be tight-fisted”, in other words someone who is mean with spending money and does not like spending money, when visualized as a hand clenched into a fist actually has the appearance of a closed anus. Shut tight and refusing to give out, distribute, or disburse its contents. Then there are the unavoidable anal references in some common expressions connected to money. There is the term to be “as mean as mouse shit”. And the expression to earn “jack shit”, as in to earn very little money. Spending has to be limited or “mean” if one

does not have any money or there is very little money available or there is restricted access to money. All could be descriptive of the condition of being poor and being in “tight” circumstances when one has to be careful with money because of uncertain economic or social circumstances. Whilst being a spendthrift could be regarded as being loose with the contents of one’s bowels, with very loose verging on suffering from diarrhoea.

However, that the *interest* in money is similarly rooted psychoanalytically in anal erotism can be contested on the grounds that here what “the interest” signifies is a looking for, a searching for, a trying to accumulate money *prior* to spending it. One is hunting and gathering in the wild, so to speak; or wanting, desiring, to do so, or to have the ability and opportunities to do so. And, thus, under the oral hypothesis, what one is trying to find is money as *food*. With regard to language usage, this would take us to the almost generic usage of orality and food-based terms such as “bread” and “dough” for money and income, and “the breadwinner” being the person in charge of the household’s financial wellbeing.

From the above perspective it does seem possible that the *spending* of money could be separated theoretically from the *interest* in money. It seems that, just as in relation to the argument made with respect to orality and money generally, it can be argued that Freud and Ferenczi were looking at the wrong end of the body, the anus and not the mouth, in their attempt to theorize where the *interest* in money arose from. But, in their *identification* of the psychoanalytic process by which the *interest* in money was generated, they had pinpointed correctly the mechanisms of symbolic equivalence and repression necessary to the process – but used faeces as the symbolic object, which, possibly, if it were to be used, could be used for the *spending* of money. Ironically, had such a distinction been made between interest in and spending of money, the classical paradigm that championed anality would be further strengthened in the spending half of the divide.

It seems it is possible to argue that Ferenczi and Abraham did not demonstrate how there could exist a co-identification with faeces in the symbolic equation with regard to *both* the spending of money *and* the interest in money. Questions

were not raised about the anality symbolism that propped up the entire theoretical structure, and, thus, what they did not disturb was the overarching symbolic process with faeces at its centre. An overarching co-identificatory process that, when delved into deeper theoretically unravelled into a problematic. At the very least the unravelling means that there is a potential to separate the symbolism and symbolic equation for the spending of money when it is compared and contrasted with the symbolism and symbolic equation for the interest in money.

## **6. Dirt, Shit, Poverty, and Cleanliness**

There is a further point that ought to be made concerning the anal developmental stage as determined and structured within the Freudian classical equation. Poverty can often equal the lack of sanitary conditions and the presence of dirt, because lack of money can frequently equal being forced to inhabit surroundings that are less clean. Life could be lived in dirtier conditions and thus become a dirt-filled life. For people who live in conditions like these, it appears frequently that it is in describing poverty-ridden circumstances that the spending and earning of money are directly linked to fighting and attempting to alleviate 'shit' and 'dirt'. Expressions and idioms reflect this. There is the term "dirt poor" as in having absolutely nothing to live on and thus, presumably, being forced to live in conditions that are aligned with being poverty-stricken. Then there is "they live like shit" as in they live disgustingly or they live in degrading conditions. Being "dirt poor" and surrounded by "shit" and the problems of sewage disposal were standard features of poverty-inflicted conditions up until the middle of the twentieth century in western countries; but such "dirty", "filthy" conditions are still ongoing in many other parts of the world particularly in Asia and Africa, and parts of Eastern Europe. The battle against bad sewage disposal and poor sanitation is structurally aligned in economic developmental terms with the alleviation of poverty and the improvement of the health of people who are poor.

Thus, it could be argued that what is also underpinning the Freudian classical money equation, a particular underpinning that has not been acknowledged, is that *unconsciously* the faeces and striving for cleanliness that feature in the anal

developmental stage of the child are also part of the *phylogenetic* structuring that could be said to have been introjected with the force of an *unconscious reality* into an equivalent developmental phase of mankind. There has always been (and probably will always be) an economic, or industrial, or social epoch, or phase, or 'age' in which mankind strives to overcome poverty and dirt and, literally, shit in his environmental surroundings through the earning of and spending of money and his striving for cleanliness and an orderly existence. The connection can be made with the infant's psychoanalytic anal developmental 'age' when he or she, too, has to be educated about faeces and trained in cleanliness and an orderly routine. Dirt, poverty, and insanitary conditions are associated with the lack of money. In the following extract from Freud's paper on 'Character and Anal Eroticism' (1908) in which he explained how certain character types were formed out of anal erotic sublimations and reaction-formations, he writes of those who were very particular about cleanliness that:

The intrinsic necessity for this connection is not clear, of course, even to myself. But I can make some suggestions which may help towards an understanding of it. Cleanliness, orderliness and trustworthiness give exactly the impression of a reaction-formation against an interest in what is unclean and disturbing and should not be part of the body. ('Dirt is matter in the wrong place.')

(Freud, 1908, pp. 172-173)

Following repression, shit could become associated with money: filthy lucre, but on the basis that *not* having money causes filth and causes an environment to look like "shit". And for people to be living among open sewers, overflowing gutters, and dirt. Freud stated classically that: *"It is possible that the contrast between the most precious substance known to men and the most worthless, which they reject as waste matter ('refuse'), has led to this specific identification of gold with faeces"* (Freud, 1908, p. 174). But there appeared to be no alarm bell at least tinkling to nag at the seemingly effortless overlooking at querying such a "contrast" between a "precious substance" and the attitude expressed towards it of worthlessness and, indeed, rubbish, waste matter, "refuse": in other words,

insanitary conditions. Surely such a disparity in perspective could amount psychically to more than the observations that Freud (1908) detailed of common language usage and common stories, such as devils' and witches' gold turning into shit, or a spendthrift being known as a "shitter" of the currency? And it could be that such stories in themselves by expressing those same dismissive attitudes were also concealing something and demonstrating some particularized psychical mechanism. One can envisage there being a hatred of 'dirt' and 'shit' in circumstances in which only money can improve the situation by providing better conditions. This conscious reality would provide a conscious connection between dirt and deep poverty and money. Repression of the need for but unavailability of money would become the central feature of the psychical processes that could take place in such situations. The path that the repressed need could follow would be a path that takes that need, represses it, and only allows it to emerge again once it has overturned itself, changed itself and its focus, and thus performed *an act of reversal*. In such circumstances the utter need for money could indeed become derided as a worthless desire. With such a reversal, money, instead of being a necessity, would be dismissed as rubbish. What Ferenczi, Abraham, Jones, and, of course, Freud himself did not speculate upon, (although all three of his psychoanalytic disciples placed tremendous importance, correctly, upon Freud's 1908 paper) was that such repression and reversal might have taken place with regard to money, faeces and anality.

One is reminded of the Biblical saying that the love of money is at the root of all evil, and that the manner in which the term "filthy lucre" is commonly used emphasizes the undesirability of pursuing money and the necessity to distance the human subject from the object of money by decrying it as unclean, something that one has to be protected from and prevented from acquiring in too great an amount.

But an act of reversal upon its desired object would not necessarily mean changing from love to hate; it could mean changing the object of desire entirely, that is, making the new object of desire the direct opposite of the repressed desired object of the instinctual need. With money (the repressed desired object) now connected to dirt and faeces under the anal theory of money (and thus

worthless rubbish and refuse), the new object of desire becomes dirt's reversal: cleanliness. Cleanliness would become loved and strived for in whatever circumstances. But the repressed desire could still make itself felt with talk of "money laundering" and "clean money" in relation to money obtained by "dirty" corrupt methods.

But money itself can be clean by itself. There clearly exists an untainted, strong desire for access to a clean life without poverty that clean money can provide. One of the first things that previously poor people who have attained money tend to do is to buy a house. A *clean* house that is an opposition to cramped, crowded, or dirty, unsanitary living conditions. Money *can* be equated with cleanliness of itself. Money can also be equated with the cleanliness of *newness*: money's purchasing power has the ability to buy new things, and can be equated with the freshness and cleanliness of newly acquired spaces. At the other end of the spectrum from the satisfactions of the wants of what could be considered to be 'the common man', one could consider the oligarch's yacht, the billionaire's mansion above and below ground, the ruler's vast palaces and monolithic buildings, all kept in pristine conditions. Having money, wishing for money could equal, could symbolize, the cleanliness of the 'good' life, the life of few material wants. Thus, the life where financial needs are satisfied could equal a *clean life*.

It seems clear that anality does and can stand alongside orality in thinking about money. One should not rule out the well established theories that state that money exists in a relation with faeces. One can examine the possibilities of separating the *spending* of 'money' from the *interest* in money theoretically, one can examine language and idiomatic usage, and one can explore the possibility of a displaced affective association between money and faeces caused by severe repression. But, however, even these theoretical possibilities still lead us back ultimately to what this thesis considers to be the primary and stronger association between *food* and money. There is a human need to be near the sources of food and there is a drive to have or to obtain the means and abilities to obtain food however abstracted 'food' might have become in its concrete forms of representations. This was clearly the situation in 1960s' Africa where,



as argued in *Chapter Five*, this drive, the oral drive, was on full display both legitimately and illegitimately.

The following section, which concludes both the chapter and the thesis as a whole, unfolds a few final thoughts on money as a neglected subject of psychoanalysis whose importance to both the individual and the group was rarely deliberated upon. This general attitude taken towards the discussion of money and psychoanalysis can be laid at Freud's door.

## **7. Conclusion : Why did Freud Leave Out Money?**

I have argued throughout my thesis – particularly with its championing of orality – that psychoanalysis did not seem to look closely enough at what could be the severe impacts and impressions of money on the minds of individuals both inside and outside the consulting room. *Chapter Three* explored what money meant for them and what money did for them or stood for in their minds. However, what psychoanalysis did look at and tried to examine was what people interested in money were like in terms of their infantile drive structuring. Psychoanalysis did attempt to examine how some groups, for example, hoarders or misers, could be characterized or grouped together within the structures of psychoanalytic knowledge. Classical psychoanalysis examined certain characters, who they were, and character formations, what they were like psychoanalytically; instead, perhaps, the *commodity* should have been interpreted: what it was, what it was used for, and what it meant to people psychically. This difference in approach might have led to the examination of a deeply repressed orality. It is this different approach, an oral approach, which can now be suggested as a theoretical alternative to the classical anal approach. However, anality was psychoanalysis's standard-bearer and its favoured answer in relation to questions about money. For too long a period in psychoanalysis only anality seemed to provide what was regarded as an adequate explanation and only the anal phase of development was reached for in order to explain what was considered to be the root causation of money complexes and of all attitudes towards wealth and financial behaviour.

If psychoanalysis had earlier looked more closely at *what money is*, what it represents, what it stands for in the life of the individual, it is quite possible that at the very least there could have been theoretical provision for a more flexible causal structure for the roots of the interest in money, and, as a result, there could have developed a psychoanalytic theory of money that could have enabled later researchers and psychoanalysts to explore more widely and more fruitfully the toxic and pathological offshoots of the interest in money, such as financial corruption and other money complexes. These offshoots and complexes that have become more complicated as our relations to money and financial wealth have become more complex with each passing decade.

The question regarding why the probing of money was left out by psychoanalytic thinkers was as interesting to ponder as the question of what role money played in the psyche of man. To leave something out – like to leave someone out – is an *action* that is taken, even if it turns out to be an *unconscious act*, with *unconscious motivations*. With regard to why psychoanalysis left money out there are therefore *conscious* motivations and *unconscious* motivations. In fact if one adheres to and uses psychoanalysis's own precepts, the latter, unconscious motivations, are more important as a determination. It is clearly possible to state that money is associated unconsciously with *life* through the instincts that preserve life, that is, through the need for food that preserves life, and thus through orality. Fear of being without money can be the equivalent of fear of death. People kill other people to get another person's money. Money is associated unconsciously with being able to live, with being kept alive, and being able to maintain life. We say to make your 'living', as in "is that enough for you to live on?" and "is that job good enough to earn you a living?" and "what am I going to live on?" If our money 'disappears', if we lose all our money, there is fear of or the actuality of collapse. It is a collapse: it is a 'depression' or a 'breakdown' whether economic or personal, and these are experiences that can take many years to recover from – or not at all. It appears that in both personal and national cases such economic depressions and breakdowns leave conscious and unconscious marks of memory.

Perhaps I can be granted some leeway here for the relating of an observation. In a baker's shop a small child, a girl aged about three or four, was standing clutching a fistful of dollars. An adult held out her hand in an asking motion and this delighted the child. She did not appear to understand why the adult wanted her to give some of her money, but she clearly did not want to share her possession and refused. The adult made the same requesting motion again and the child was now positively gleeful in refusing. However, the most notable factor was how *odd* it looked to see a child holding money. Indeed, one could even go as far as to characterize the sight as looking wrong, as if something inappropriate to her status as a child. The child saw that the pieces of paper, one-dollar bills that she clutched in her hand, were similar to the notes of paper that some of the adults around her were handing over and then carrying off bags of bread. She knew that what she had was valuable but she did not fully understand how it was used as a transaction, but she was watching closely. However, it is unclear how the child could work out for herself that what she held in her hand had any connection in any form to what she may have deposited into her potty. That is a connection that would have to be *forced* into her unconscious. Whilst everyday she would have been absorbing the process of money being handed over for food items until that passed into her unconscious as she got older: spontaneously, naturally, and organically. Perhaps it ought to be remembered that many children from infancy accompany a parent during shopping for food, particularly if that parent is the mother. From an extremely young age, a few weeks even, they are in the presence of (and observing as they get older) transactions that involve money as coins and notes: something being handed over and food being received in return.

Psychoanalysts did not question enough and did not seem to ask enough times: what if we were wrong? What if, even within the boundaries of a given body of psychoanalytic knowledge, there were other roots, other possible causations for the interest in money, for the drive for money? *What if it were oral not anal?* Or oral *and* anal. What my thesis has tried to do is to bridge the critical gap in theoretical writings that exposed anality as being the single foundation for the unconscious symbolization of money. I have attempted to provide an alternative

exploration of what the root cause of the interest in money could be by approaching the subject from the psychoanalytic theoretical perspective of *orality*.

*An in-depth theoretical consideration of the significance of money is missing in psychoanalysis.* But was it deliberately left out by Sigmund Freud? *J'accuse!* Freud *did* know how important money was to mankind.

Money *is* in psychoanalysis. And in one particular respect it is so prominent that it can be difficult to see the issue at first: that is, without money one cannot get access to psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis was the medical treatment in which 'the doctor' was paid to attend to a patient by "just" sitting by the patient and listening to the patient talk. "The talking cure". There were no "healing hands" on the patient's body, no chemical or plant-based drugs proffered for imbibing. Quite often 'the doctor' also spoke to the patient and a conversation might be entered into that could also involve an interpretation of what was being said or felt. But paramount was the one-way traffic from the patient's mind via his or her words to 'the doctor' who listened. And then the patient had to pay 'the doctor'. Psychoanalysis can be unattainable without the means of money for someone seeking private psychoanalytic treatment for an illness (even in low-fee clinics) or for somebody who wants to train in the profession, who also has to undergo long-term analysis that has to be paid for. Money is woven into the fibres of all kinds of business life and psychoanalysis has its business aspects, too. Psychoanalysts can find the acknowledgement of this unsettling and problematic (as we saw in *Chapter Three*) but psychoanalysts have to run the financial side of their operations as any small business would in terms of accountancy and ensuring that it is viable as a going concern.

The cost of getting psychoanalytic treatment and continuing with it and the cost of the candidate's own training analysis have always been issues that connect to the class or background of the people who receive psychoanalysis privately or who become psychoanalysts. There is a preponderance in the profession of people from more financially secure backgrounds. Poorer and less financially secure people find difficulties in accessing the means to enter psychoanalysis as

a profession or to receive private psychoanalytic treatment. Provision of psychoanalytic therapy by the state health service can entail a very lengthy waiting time, and when and if provided the durations of treatment cannot match the open-ended nature and frequency of private treatment over months and years. In comparison perhaps it is a short course over some weeks (six, eight?) of one-hour duration by appointment, and for treatment based on cognitive therapy.

But the question of anxiety over lack or loss of money and income and the resulting impact on access to psychoanalysis also, critically, extends to 'the doctor', too. Given that psychoanalysis is mostly a paid-for *private* medical treatment even today, it is even more remarkable that psychoanalytic theorists did not expend time and thought on the anxiety that is caused by *not* having money and having to *worry* about money, the *fear* of losing money, all states of mind which they must have experienced having no safety catch structures themselves in place if they had no patients or if patients did not pay their bills. Thoughts like these must have been too close to the bone, providing further reasons for money to be ignored theoretically. In *Chapter Three* it was seen how Freud and his colleagues had to ensure that they made enough money to live on and with which they could support their families. The ignoring of money could have been a deliberate omission, and an omission occasioned by shame at the sheer necessity and importance of something so material. Did Freud feel ashamed that something such as mere money could play such a profound part in one's life? It is my view that this was the case. In his theoretical work Freud undermined and stripped away money's importance, consigning money to the rubbish and refuse bin as worthlessness and dejecta. It could even be considered as a full frontal *unconscious* attack on money by Freud, or at the very least a disavowal.

In one sense Marx, who provided wrenching descriptions of his poverty (as cited in *Chapter One*) and attitude towards money, could be regarded as being on the other side of the coin: he did not care that he went without money. He was determined that the lack of money that he wrote about was not to stop him from doing his intellectual work. Money was a mere material construct and he would

do without it. Engels would support him financially. Marx was prepared to suffer, to go without, as nothing was to intrude on his accumulation of knowledge and information. The accumulation of money and wealth was to go its own way. But 'not having' money is as important and critical as 'having' money. Money was still a dominant factor in Marx's life *because* he did *not* have money. The importance of money to human beings is generally such that money drives them to do things, to *have* to do things, to become something that they perhaps do not want to become or did not plan on becoming. Sometimes to being someone that s/he does not particularly like being: a (wo) man corrupted.

But ultimately, at the heart of it, is a repression of the need for food and of the precariousness of the lives of those who daily struggle to eat. What 'money' has come to represent is an abstraction of this fact: the rendering of the triumph over the deadly power of hunger and starvation; the omnipotence of man over an utterly fundamental 'want'. The hunter-gatherer is no longer bringing meat to the cave's table as in those *primaeval* days; he is hunting and gathering with and for money and the unconscious hope is still for food. I shall leave the last word with Freud, as a theory is a way of explanation and, perhaps, that is why theories are not cast in stone and can be supplanted, contradicted, opposed by other theories.

a few words of critical reflection. It may be asked whether and how far I am myself convinced of the truth of the hypotheses that have been set out in these pages. My answer would be that I am not convinced myself and that I do not seek to persuade other people to believe in them. Or, more precisely, that I do not know how far I believe in them. There is no reason, as it seems to me, why the emotional factor of conviction should enter into this question at all. It is surely possible to throw oneself into a line of thought and to follow it wherever it leads out of simple scientific curiosity, or, if the reader prefers, as an *advocatus diaboli*, who is not on that account himself sold to the devil.

(Freud, 1920, p. 59)

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